

Issue No. 3 • MAY/JUNE 1987 • 95p.

SLAM

FILMS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

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**HE'S
BACK!**

**EVIL DEAD II
INTERVIEW**

THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK PLUS THE FILMS OF DAVID
LYNCH AND MUCH MUCH MORE.....INSIDE



HEERBE'S JOHNNY!

WELCOME and before going any further let me explain the price rise. It's quite simple really...you give me an extra 10p per issue and that's all there is to it. Seriously though the reason for the rise is that it means I can now afford to bring SAMHAIN out on a bi-monthly basis which is what it started off as but then...oh just read the editorial in issue 2 which explains the brief stint as a quarterly. The point is you will now only have to wait two months for each issue which hopefully means we'll also be able to be a bit more topical which brings me nicely to the reason this issue wasn't printed until mid-May instead of early May as planned.

As you will see on pages 5-7 we've got an interview with Sam Raimi and Bruce Campbell which was very much a last minute thing. To put you in the picture it is now 3am on Monday 11. On Friday May 1 SAMHAIN was ready to go to the printers when I was told that Raimi and Campbell would be in London during the following week to promote EVIL DEAD II. A couple of frantic phone calls and I managed to get Kim Newman to supply us with an interview (for which I am eternally grateful Kim) and PSA Public Relations, who are handling the publicity for the film, to supply us with stills. The interview was conducted on Tuesday May 5 I received the stills on Friday May 8 and the interview the following morning. In about six hours time I should be taking the completed issue to the printers and the rest is out of my hands. Anyway I hope you think it's been worth the wait but I'm afraid you'll have to wait another two months for Michael Wesley's THE SHINING retrospect. Something had to go to make way for the interview and that was it.

As you will see on page 25 we've started a FREE collector's corner in which you can seek that elusive item (and from next issue you can sell them too) so use it. It's there for you. It's feasible that we could carry a similar service for pen pals so if you're interested let me know. In the mean time keep the letters coming in and if we continue to get enough artwork Sam's portrait gallery could become a regular feature although no artwork in pencil please, just ink, as the former doesn't reproduce very well.

Also new this time is the start of an occasional series "Forgotten but filed" in which Phil Godfrey will be looking at some movies most of you probably won't have come across. Let us know what you think. Incidentally Phil's wife is expecting a baby any day now so our best wishes go out to her.

Thank you time now and first off a big thanks to David FitzGerald, one of the continuity announcers at TSW, who was kind enough to dedicate a recent horror double bill they showed to all readers of SAMHAIN (Did any readers in the South West catch it?) David is currently working on a book about films shot in Devon and Cornwall and he's asked me to ask you if you know of any, other than the obvious ones like REVOLUTION, PINK FLOYD- THE WALL, WATER etc. They don't have to be horror films, as long as they were shot (even if it was only a scene) in this part of the country. If anyone can help out I'll forward any letters I receive on to David.

Also a big thanks to Jean Pierre Putters, editor of the excellent French magazine MAD MOVIES. If you don't read French (like moi) then don't worry as there are enough unusual pictures/poster reproductions to keep any horror fan happy and the good news is they've brought out a companion mag, L'IMPACT which is every bit as good as MM. Jean Pierre was kind enough to give us a plug in issue 45 of MM. And an even bigger thanks go to Martin Coxhead, editor of VIDEO - THE MAGAZINE who gave us a fantastic plug in a recent issue which resulted in a big boost in readership. Martin's obviously a SAMHAINIAN kind of guy as VTM is very horror film-orientated and if you haven't already seen a copy check it out. And of course I mustn't forget the horror fanzines YEEUUUGH! and PIECES OF MARY, both of whom have been kind enough to give us a mention and you can catch their addresses on page 25.

No Golden Bog Roll this issue due to lack of space so I'll just nominate a quickie: The Dickhead planners who, in their wisdom, have decided that Exeter can do without its ABC cinema which is being pulled down next month to make way for more bloody offices leaving the city with just one three-screen cinema. All I can say is I hope the cinema was built on a graveyard and that you forget to move the bodies. POLTERGEIST III THE OFFICE SITE! I've got so many memories of that cinema, not all of them repeatable, but with cinema attendances supposedly on the increase and with empty offices all over the city it seems ridiculous that they should be pulling the old place down. I believe the last film they are planning to show is CRITTERS which makes it even sadder!

Many of you have requested subscriptions and who are we to argue so if you look on the back page you'll see just what to do and you'll also notice that the subscription rates haven't been affected by the price rise on the cover so buy it direct from me and you still only pay 11p per issue inclusive of postage. Can't say fairer than that.

Something else that there wasn't room for this issue is your top ten faves but keep them coming in and we'll compile a bumper one for next time around.

Finally, I do try to reply to everyone who writes, personally but especially when the deadline draws near, that's not always possible so please be patient (Sue Johnson I promise I'll do your Michael Biehn tape this week!). So that just about wraps up another issue. I'm off to bed and don't forget SAM 4 will be out in July. Until then take care.

John Gullidge

(2) John Gullidge 11-5-87



CLIVE BARKER AND SAM HAIN INDULGE IN A SPOT OF MUTUAL APPRECIATION.



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This issue is dedicated to my parents, for not only putting up with me, but for positively encouraging me, and to the memory of Patrick Troughton, my first and favourite Doctor.



HAPPY birthday to the big three. Petet Cushing, Christopher Lee and Vincent Price all celebrate their birthdays this month, incredibly all three over a two day period. Petet Cushing will be 74 on May 26 a day before Vincent Price hits 76 and Chris Lee (the youngster of the group) reaches the tender age of 65. A month later on June 26 we all remember Peter Lorre who is now sadly no longer with us but would have been celebrating his 83rd birthday....

YOU know the feeling. You pick up a copy of the TV Times and turn straight to the film page to see what's on and lo and behold there's a horror movie on that was last shown a couple of years ago. William Castle's BUG (1975) is a good example as it seems to crop up every other year on BBC but down here in the TSW region we've been taking it one step further. Scheduled for a screening on Friday May 15 is Hammer's 1958 DRACULA. What's so wrong with that you ask. Well nothing, it's a great film but it was shown on BBC1 a couple of months ago. Now surely that's taking it a bit far. To show a film once every two years is one thing but every two months....

LOVE AT SECOND BITE: DRACULA COMES TO HOLLYWOOD again stars George Hamilton and Susan St. James - hopefully Drac didn't suck the blood of Ms. St. James' former co-star, Rock Hudson....

Real-life Salem witch Laurie Cabot, in her capacity as spokes-person for The Witches League of Public Awareness, wants George Miller's film THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK banned, on the grounds that it misrepresents the League's 100,000 practicing members. Sorry Laurie, our opinion is that the film should be seen, a verdict we reached on the grounds of film scholarship, totally unswayed by the fact that the eponymous witches are played by Cher, Susan Sarandon and Michelle Pfeiffer, wearing not a lot of clothes (Jack Nicholson's in it too). Laurie has also complained about the commercialisation of the Festival of SAMHAIN (she should see what we've got planned for our October 31 issue) now where've we heard that before? Just don't buy any Halloween masks off this woman.

WHAT'S become of Brian De Palma? Well his next feature will be a big screen version of TV's THE UNTOUCHABLES starring Senn Connery. Not surprisingly the star enthuses about the project: "For the first time he (De Palma) has really interesting characters that people are going to be interested in." He then goes on to say just where De Palma has been going wrong of late. "The problem I felt with De Palma's work before" said the former Bond "was that it was always a bit distanced and you were just admiring all the sort of Hitchcockian elements and things." Well I hope THE UNTOUCHABLES is an improvement because, to my mind De Palma's never surpassed CARRIE and he made that over ten years and a lot of films ago....

JAWS '87 now JAWS - THE REVENGE and of course you first read about the film in SAMHAIN....



R.I.P. Patrick Troughton 1920-1987

AS video companies continue the nefarious practice of re-releasing films under different titles and mis-leadingly packaged as new material, SAMHAIN will endeavour to warn its readers what's what. For starters ENBALMED is MORTUARY and THE CHILLING IS NIGHT OF THE ZOMBIES. Hey, don't thank us, it's all part of the service....

AVATAR are to release Michael Soavi's AQUARIUS (formerly STAGEFRIGHT and, at the Avoriaz festival, BLOODY BIRD/L'OISEAU DE SANG), an homage to Soavi's mainman, Dario Argento. This Soavi guy gets about a bit, he was second assistant director on TENEBRAE and PHENOMENA, assistant director on DEMONS, and directed the documentary DARIO ARGENTO'S WORLD OF HORROR (and just how long are we going to have to wait for that one to get a release?). But Samhainians will probably be more familiar with him on account of his exploits in front of the camera - Soavi was the dude forced to watch his girlfriend puking her guts up in CITY OF THE LIVING DEAD, just before Father Thomas pulled his brains out. His face was eaten by pink blanchmanges from outer space in ALIEN TERROR. He got to wear a scary mask and hand out complimentary tickets in DEMONS, till the good guys poked him in the eye with a metal spike (he also appeared in the film-within-a-film). In addition he still found time to appear in ATLANTIS INTERCEPTORS and Lamberto Bava's just-released-in-the-UK A BLADE IN THE DARK, and tried to molest Jennifer Connelly in PHENOMENA. This guy is a SAMHAIN Hall-of-Famer if ever I saw one....

TWO long lost films of interest to Samhainians on their way on video are Wes Craven's SWAMP THING (our chance to see if it's the clunker it's made out to be) and George Romero's KNIGHTRIDERS ("See chivalric bikers! See Tom Savini act!")

GRAVEYARD SHIFT which you read about back in issue one and which has a poster as good as it's ad line ("Lots of people work the graveyard shift...firemen, waitresses, cops, cab drivers, vampires.") didn't get a theatrical release over here but you can catch it on video when Medusa release it on video at the beginning of June....

THE latest news on Tobe Hooper's TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE 2 is none-too encouraging I'm afraid. Apparently Cannon took it to the BBFC who took one look at it and didn't like what they saw. They returned it to Cannon telling them that if they made the cuts necessary to give the film an 18 certificate, there wouldn't be a film left so it looks as though it won't be released here however we will be reviewing it in the next issue!

DUSTIN Hoffman and Warren Beatty star in the new blockbuster ISHTAR but do they know that Ishtar is the name of the goddess in Herschell Gordon Lewis' notorious BLOOD FEAST? I think not....

MARIO Bava's classic BLACK SUNDAY (1960) famed for its sensational black and white photography is rumoured to be up for the colorisation treatment by which black and white movies are, with the aid of an advanced computer, given colour!....

MALE chauvinist pig department. Those admirers of the Amazon-like Sigourney Weaver, who were disappointed that she didn't strip down to her undies again in ALIENS should dash out to see HALF MOON STREET in which Ms. Weaver's upper torso gets a full airing....

WHILE we wait with baited breath for James Herbert's series on BBC Channel 4 are showing a series of four one-hour psychological mystery films under the heading WHEN REASON SLEEPS. Inspired by a series of Coys etchings entitled "Los Caprichos", each of the films portrays individual characters coming face to face with the supernatural. The first one (FEAR IN THE DARK) transmitted on Sunday May 10, underlined the dictum that violence begets violence in its tale of a tough and rebellious youth who is the victim of a brutal childhood. The second story, OUT OF TIME, is a chilling tale of unfulfilled desires set in wartime London starring Ian Phillips and written by Ronald Frame. A SUMMER GHOST by Maria Fitzgerald, tells of a young girl who, in order to attract the attention of her parents, makes up horrifying stories of ghostly appearances which return to haunt her in later life. Finally A.V. Mellor's THE SCAR tells of a young writer who tries to trace a legendary actor whose career ended in scandal following the death of a colleague. But he finds himself having to defend the actor from the mysterious avenger of his crime.

MARY Whitehouse, Winston Churchill and co are now having a go at magazines (chiefly Fangoria) and comic and the fanzine scene, healthier now than it's ever been, may well come under attack. It would be nice if genre fans mounted some concerted opposition this time out. Any thoughts let us know....

WATCH out for - THE MIRACLE AT BLOOD CIRCUS (Horror Wrestling!), THE ABBOTS CITY (the great Peter Cushing reviving his Sherlock Holmes role though he'll have a job topping Jeremy Brett), TOOLBOX MURDERS 2!... and if you're looking forward to that you'll no doubt be wetting yourself at the prospect of MANIAC 2 (then again Joe Spinell has been trying to raise finance for this one for about five years)...THE HAUNTING OF HAMILTON HIGH, a sequel to Paul Lynch's PROM NIGHT...BRIDE OF THE RE-ANIMATOR, CREEPSHOW 2, DEADLY FRIEND 2, DEMONS 3 EXORCISTS 0, ET 2, FX 2, GHOSTBUSTERS 2, GREMLINS 2, GHOULIES 2, HOUSE 2, LARRY COHEN'S ISLAND OF THE ALIVE, I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE (remake?), KING KONG LIVES (but you'll wish he hadn't), LASERBLAST 2, PHIBES RESURRECTS, RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD 2, LARRY COHEN again with RETURN TO SALEM'S LOT which apparently has not a lot to do with the original, SPLASH 2, a new TALES FROM THE CRYPT, TERMINATOR 2, TWILIGHT OF THE DEAD - the fourth part of Romero's trilogy! Is nothing new....

APPARENTLY not as....Robert Bloch to direct THE BATES MOTEL (PSYCHO 4).. More next time.



SAM RAIMI AND BRUCE CAMPBELL TALK

EVIL DEAD II

SAMHAIN

KIM NEWMAN INTERVIEWS THE DIRECTOR AND THE STAR OF THE EAGERLY-AWAITED "EVIL DEAD II."

SR: Four years ago in a small cabin in the woods in Tennessee something terrible happened. We filmed those events in the terrible days of 1981 and they became known as THE EVIL DEAD, and we hoped that they would never happen again...

KN: But...

SR: ...Something has happened in that small cabin in the woods and with my camera I recorded these events and we cut them together, as nasty and horrible as they were, as frightening and terrifying as it was to look upon the film...

BC: It was a story we felt obliged to tell the world.

SR: ...We have that film, and we have the chronicle of that haunting experience, that terrifying moment in recent history, and we have called it EVIL DEAD II, and we hope that the audience will come and see it and enjoy the show.

KN: Do you see this as a comedy or a horror film?

BC: Sam?

SR: Well, the first EVIL DEAD offended some people, and so we decided that, rather than offend people - which wasn't our goal, really - we'd create a picture that was exciting, thrilling, scary and fun. And so this time what we tried to do was remove those portions of the story that would be offensive and not just end up with something less than the first EVIL DEAD. We knew we had to put something else in, so we decided to add more humour and have a better time of it at least. And so that was the trade-off that we made.

BC: We thought possibly if we did that we could get some crossover audiences. People who might go and see NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET or something but would not go and see THE EVIL DEAD. We were trying to reach more people. Every filmmaker wants to get the world to come to the film.

KN: How are you doing that so far?

BC: It's doing well in the United States. It's not a runaway blockbuster but it's making money. It's been sold to Vestron Video in the States at a profit for DEG. It's been sold throughout most of the world and we've gotten very good critical reviews - for the most part, that is: there's always a few people that hate the picture.

KN: You got terrific reviews over here for the first one, but not so much in the States.

SR: I am very much in debt to Palace Pictures, the British distributor of both EVIL DEAD films.

KN: I think they're in debt to you, as well...

SR: In fact, they do owe me a lot of money, now you come to mention it.

BC: Call those guys!

SR: It was a mutually beneficial relationship.

KN: You were their first movie, and they've gone on to big things...

BC: We're just pleased they did so well with it.

SR: They handled the picture like a very special picture, which is really what it needed, while in the States they just more or less threw the picture into the theatres...

BC: They said: "This is a horror movie..."

SR: But Palace came up with the unique advertising concept, and they brought me here to promote it personally and they spent some time and effort to generate some excitement about the picture before they released it. They took a little extra work, patience and planning, and I think it paid off for them. They really felt strongly about the picture in a positive way and tried to make the audience members feel that way before releasing the picture.

KN: It was a big success here on video when it was still legally available.

SR: They're going to re-release it on video.

KN: In a recognizable form?

SR: I don't know. They may have to make some cuts in it, but it should nevertheless still pack a powerful punch. Some very minimal cuts I think.

KN: Did you follow the controversy?

BC: Sam came over for the trial.

SR: They had a court case in Leeds concerning the confiscation of THE EVIL DEAD as a quote "Video Nasty" unquote, so I flew from Los Angeles to London, which is quite a trip - about eleven hours - took the train from London to Leeds, which is...

KN: Eleven hours as well.

SR: Yeah, quite a trip. I walk into the courtroom, and I'm about to give my Captain Kirk free speech routine. "What is freedom? Freedom is..." I was all set to really cut loose. I've seen MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON.

BC: You know how to filibuster.

SR: I was all set to deliver my freedom speech and be a big shot and save the case, jerk some tears, and suddenly the judge said: "I'm sorry Mr. Raimi, but it is not your intent in making the picture that is in question here but rather the picture itself, so your testimony will not be needed." So I got back on the train from Leeds to London and flew back from London to Los Angeles. It was quite an experience.

BC: We did follow it closely. It was certainly of interest to us that it would cause such a stir and be confiscated. In West Germany, they're still going through the Supreme Court to get it out.

SR: Censorship is a very frightening thing in my opinion. I would be very upset if in the United States they tried to ban our picture. They aren't allowed to ban pictures in the United States. It's illegal which is very nice. I'm thrilled that nobody can tell me I can't watch a movie, because I'm 27 years old and I'd hate it if someone with a particular set of values decided for me what I can and can't watch. The main crime is that there are so many injustices to be addressed that need so much attention, so many very important issues - child hunger, child abuse, crime - that to be wasting government money on something like this is really the crime and I think those people should reconsider their viewpoints.

KN: Has EVIL DEAD II been passed uncut here?

SR: No.

BC: There was a cut, but it wasn't a gore thing, specifically...

SR: The government has decided that the audience will not see some things. They have already made the decision for England. One of the characters, after erroneously believing that Bruce Campbell has murdered their parents, kicks him in the face. They're determined that that is too much for people in England to see.

KN: But they don't mind the bit where the girl swallows the eyeball?

SR: It's a strange set of criteria.

KN: Did you come to films from an academic background?

SR: I don't know. I certainly studied English literature and English history at Michigan State University. I'm quite a big fan of it. My films haven't quite reflected that.

KN: There is a historical sequence in EVIL DEAD II.

SR: Right. Ash, our lead character, is rocketed back through time to battle the Evil Dead of the middle ages, and we placed it in England because the warmest reception the first film has gotten from the cinema-goers...

BC: ...has been old mother England.

SR: THE EVIL DEAD was most warmly received here in Great Britain by reviewers such as yourself and that's why we had EVIL DEAD II end in Great Britain to bring the picture home for the crowd that really seemed to like it. It's our way of saying thanks.

BC: And if they don't like II, we're going to take it back.

KN: Does that mean any EVIL DEAD III will be a British shot Robin Hood/Knights in Armour-type movie?

SR: We're currently planning on it. If EVIL DEAD II is well received, I have a very good story that we'd like to make. We just need a castle. It would be Bruce Campbell battling the Evil Dead with the English at his side. It should be a lot of fun. We might call it THE MEDIEVAL DEAD. Why not?

KN: Sooner or later Ash's chainsaw will run out of petrol.

SR: Eventually, but don't forget that the 1973 Deira 88 Oldsmobile came back with him, and there is quite a supply of gasoline in that automobile.

BC: There's grain alcohol.

SR: Ash might survive, he might not. It all depends on how warmly this picture is received.



KN: You certainly put your lead character through a lot, is there any of Ash left for further sequels?

BC: He's a wiser man now.

SR: Wiser, and a little more pained.

BC: Perhaps a good day of rest, a bath and a full meal might help him out.

SR: He cut off his left arm, so now his right arm is left. We have been toying with the idea of the old screw-on hand set. There's the hook...

BC: ...and the longbow attachment.

KN: Are you planning on doing comedies as well as horror films?

SR: Yes.

KN: I'm a great admirer of CRIMEWAVE.

SR: Oh boy. Well, that's three people then... It was a very strange picture. We do like comedies very much. Bruce is a very good comedic actor. A lot of the scenes he did in EVIL DEAD II where his hands fall to the possession of evil spirits have somewhat of a comic slant to them. His hand is intent on killing him, and at one point breaks a great deal of crockery over his head. Bruce is then forced to slice his hand off. However, that doesn't seem to stop the little surker...

BC: ...the little bugger...

SR: ...and he is continually tormented throughout the rest of the picture by that thing.

BC: Independently, before we made features, we made a lot of sappy comedies. They were fun to make and we both love the Three Stooges a lot. They were funny guys.

KN: The influence is obvious. How did you approach the ordeal of banging plates over your head, cutting your hand off, being killed in the face, getting possessed by evil spirits, being stabbed, tortured, beaten repeatedly and generally abused?

BC: One day at a time. Not overdoing it when we were not shooting. Knowing that eleven weeks would end eventually. Things like that. The movie lives on, so what you give it during that relatively short period is what you're stuck with. This being our third film, you learn from the first two. You know that in editing you've got to look at the same scene over and over again, and if it's poor or lacklustre in any way, that's what you get because you don't have the luxury of going back and reshooting a lot of things. You really have to know that though this might be exhausting and you've bruised your face here and there, that unless it's a serious threat to you it's really beside the point. You have to make the movie as powerful or as funny or as exciting as possible, and if it takes extra effort you really have to do it. I know Sam has to pull out all his stops when he's working on a picture and disregard everything else. Any crew member you talk to will say that shooting a picture is what they really love, but that it drags every ounce out of them. When they're not making pictures they're usually crawling the walls. It's a love-hate thing. I've learned from Sam that putting the effort into it means you get it back. You have the picture. That's your little gift. Every time the film is shown, you can go "Thank goodness I didn't wimp out of doing this or that." Or else it becomes a nagging nightmare, and it's not worth it. I'd rather have the scratches, the bruises...

KN: Do you ever want to retreat from the firing line, and give up acting so you can just be a producer and not get hurt?

BC: Nahhhhhh!

SR: You must have felt that way Bruce - takin' the tolls, takin' the spills and the bumps...



BC: I dunno. No, because when you get the footage back and it comes out okay, then that's all right. There are times during the middle of a take, or hanging there suspended from something while they're getting ready to shoot, you think about it, but you gotta really black that crap out or else you're doomed.

KN: You make extremely physical movies.

SR: I've got the modern-day Buster Keaton in Bruce, so I gotta take advantage of that.

BC: I think the audience really gets off on it, rather than have the main characters like fifties leading men. They were just goodlookin' guys with nice suits and big smiles. The modern-day hero can't get away with that. We came up with the idea here of maiming the character permanently. I think it worked.

KN: Aren't you worried that if this turns out to be a long-running series you'll whittle your part away and end up as Ash the basket case?

BC: I figure eventually Ash can just be an advisor after a while. He'll be in a wheelchair, telling people how to deal with the situation.

SR: In that case, I won't ask you for advice. I'm gonna talk to the guy that's still got his legs.

KN: Do you appear in the films as well?

SR: Oh yes

BC: Sam's voice is on the soundtrack a lot. And did you recognise the warrior who says "Hail he who comes from the skies to deliver us this day"? That was Sam.

SR: I always stick my ugly mug in front of the scene.

BC: He's a hambone. Sam the ham.

SR: I am.

KN: What are you planning on doing next? That's a boring question I'm required by law to ask.

BC: You took an oath right? "What is your next project?"

SR: Well Bruce has a role in a new picture.

BC: It's called MANIAC COP. I'm a good guy trying to stop a cop who has gone over the edge.

SR: He plays the hard-driving policeman. He's also been talking to Bill Dear, director of HARRY AND THE HENDERSONS, about a role in a new movie and I'm trying to get Bruce for a role in a movie that I'm trying to shoot. It's one of an anthology series that 20th Century-Fox is making called TALES OF MANHATTEN. It's a remake of the old picture. They have five different directors. Joel and Ethan Cohen (BLOOD SIMPLE) are doing one, Spike Lee (SHE'S GOTTA HAVE IT) is doing one, David Byrne (TRUE STORIES), me and one other director. It'll be a screwball comedy that Bruce will have some sort of role in...

BC: Man Hit By Bus.

SR: ...and besides that I've been writing a thriller for Universal Pictures called THE DARK MAN, and I've been producing a new horror movie called DARK OF THE MOON that I'm currently seeking financing for. It's always a battle to get these pictures financed and distributed, of course, so I'm in the first stage of warfare there. But most of the time I'm just writing.

KN: Do you have lots of unrealised projects?





SR: Yes I have file cabinets full.

KN: Do you plan on staying cheep and independent?

SR: Well independence has its advantages and disadvantages. It's very hard to get the money as an independent, and even harder to get the distribution. I'm planning to make one or two more independent pictures, and one or two pictures with studio financing. I like the creative freedom and control, but with some of the projects I went to go with the studios simply because I know I can get them done that way. More than anything, I want to be making movies. Ideally I want to be making movies where I have creative control, but lacking that I'll take just the ability to make them. I like staying in the middle of nowhere, which in my case is Detroit, Michigan, but I do have to go to Hollywood once in a while because there is the centre of distribution and finance for motion pictures.

KN: It's obvious you have a double act going.

SR: Bruce and I met in High School and we do a lot of bad jokes. We lived together for a while in an apartment, but the landlord said that unless we paid up our rent we'd be on the first bus out of town.

BC: We laughed and laughed and everyone on the bus thought we were crazy.

KN: Do you still think of yourselves as students messing around?

SR: I think so. Certainly messing around, and students who no longer study.

KN: Are you now faced with the prospect of having to grow up?

SR: God no.

KN: ...and make Ingmar Bergman movies?

SR: If we had the talent to do that, maybe we would.

KN: No one ever got physically hurt making an Ingmar Bergman movie.

SR: No, I'm a big fan, too. Our goal is not so much to teach the nature of humanity, but to thrill, entertain and uplift...

KN: You think there's no redeeming social value to your films?

SR: I don't think so. I think they probably do have redeeming social value.

BC: I have very strong feelings about the character of Ash. As silly as it is, I actually do. During the course of the film, he has only the right intentions - to stop whatever is going on - and he will take drastic measures, even if it means maiming himself to do it. No matter what you do to him, he will always, if humanly possible, stagger to his feet and try to do what's right.

KN: He does seem to do a lot of things that aren't humanly possible.

BC: That's the beauty of Cinema. Ash is the little voice that says "Go ahead, get up, do it..."

KN: Apart from Ash, very few characters last very long...

SR: It's a very tough world, the world of the Evil Dead, a very hard reality to exist in.

BC: A lot of actors, being hams by nature, love to die. Aaaaaarrgh, you know? That's one of the most dramatic things. Sam was threatening to kill me off in the first EVIL DEAD. I said that's okay but gimme a good death scene, let me go down kicking and screaming.

SR: Bruce didn't start out as an actor. He was a musician. He played in four flats.



BC: I was thrown out of three of them. That's not true, actually. Singers run in my family.

SR: In your family, they'd better.

KN: I seem to have seen this Marx Brothers movie...

SR: We think that EVIL DEAD II is a good film - Palace Pictures is distributing it, by the way...

BC: ...which we're pleased with...

SR: It opens June 26th.

BC: Apparently a very good release. 220 spots.

KN: That's every cinema in the country isn't it?

BC: It's about one fifth of them.

SR: It'll run and run.

KN: Any books you'd like to film?

SR: Yes, specifically THE SHINING because although I love Kubrick's picture, I still think there's a whole book he didn't make and it's my favourite King book. It terrified me. Stephen King liking THE EVIL DEAD was a very big plus for it. He took our picture and put a spotlight on it. I'm just starting to get into Clive Barker's stuff. I'll be very interested to see his picture, HELLRAISER. I like Clive Barker very much, except for the fact that he owes me five bucks.

BC: Five pounds.

SR: He probably doesn't remember. About two years ago, he borrowed five bucks - said he'd pay me back. Other than that he's a hell of a bridge player.

BC: Also, a cricket player, I believe.

KN: Any definitive statement for the world?

SR: Yes...yes...YES...

BC: The word is inoieum.

SR: I'd like the people of England to know that Robert Tapert, the producer of EVIL DEAD, Bruce Campbell, the star and producer, and myself, Sam Raimi, the director and co-writer, made EVIL DEAD II not to satisfy our own selfish interests - which we are usually busy satisfying - but rather to thrill the audience, to take them on a rollercoaster ride, to entertain them, to make them scream, cheer, so that they may have fun, so that they could bring a date to the show and have a whooping good time.

BC: The film is geared specifically for an audience.

SR: We tried to make it as different and unusual and wild as possible.

BC: So that even horror fans could get a couple of new twists in there.

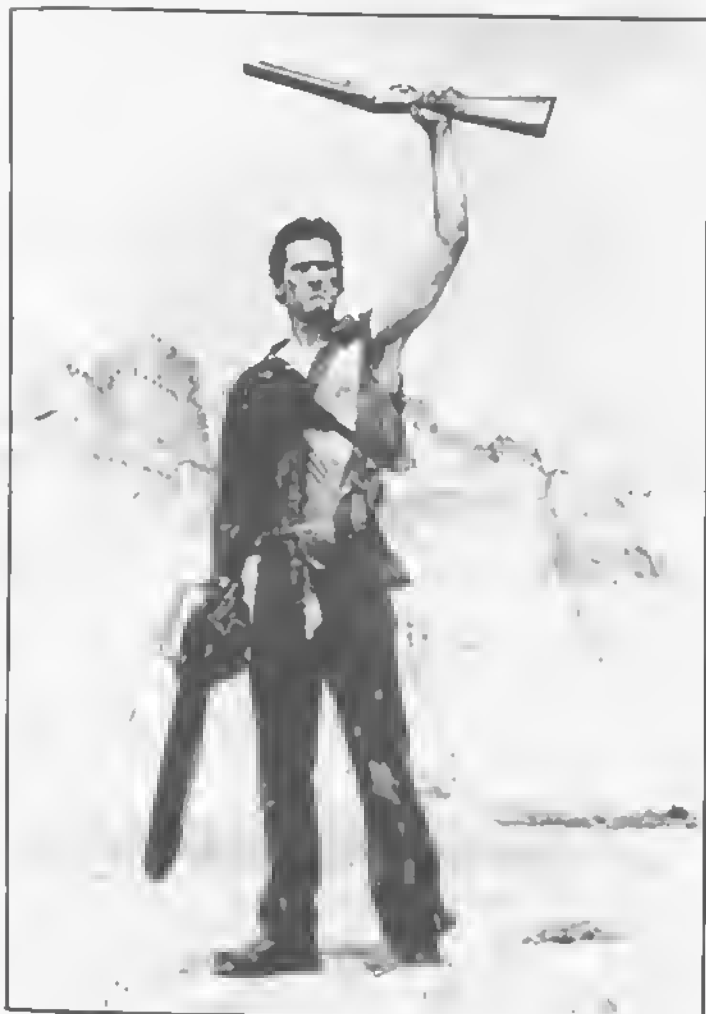
SR: We tried to tell a very good story that had a lot of shocks and scares and suspenseful moments and laughs and gags and hoo and hahs and boos and bats and bings and bongs and boffo scares and a wider assortment of monsters.

BC: Just a warning. Do Not See The Picture Alone. They should bring someone with them. As many as possible. And there are some things they might not catch the first time around, that maybe a second viewing will clear up.

KN: You want them to see it specifically in the first run theatres where ticket prices are higher?

SR: No, no, absolutely not...although the projection system is probably better there.

BC: The seats are more comfortable in the first run theatres. That's our statement.





BY MICHAEL SLATTER

THE parallels between rock music and horror imagery are many and varied, and getting ever closer with videos now standard practice for a song - witness Michael Jackson's "Thriller," ZZ Top's "TV Dinner" or anything by Ozzy Osbourne. The man who has seen it, done it and been it all is Alice Cooper. His marriage of music and theatrics was, and remains, unequalled.

From the earliest beginnings, rock has gone hand in hand with horror imagery. The first major force to connect the two was Screamin' Jay Hawkins, a blues singer/musician. Ail through the late 50's Screamin' Jay was ushered into concerts in a flaming coffin, followed by much strutting around amongst his collection of skulls and shrunken heads. He is still active today, playing in clubs around America.

Next came the dubious delights of the Rolling Stones. They garnered an evil reputation with song titles like "Sympathy for the Devil," "Paint it Black" and "Let it Bleed," but preferred a sex and drugs lifestyle. The Devil featured prominently with subsequent artists. Black Sabbath opened early concerts with a fake occult ceremony. Black Widow made LP's featuring real occult ceremonies. Blue Oyster Cult (an Alice support group) among others, followed in their wake. After the Alice Cooper Band split in 1974, the group Kiss deemed themselves worthy to step into their shoes. Their stage shows were indeed extravagant and fast-paced, but for British audiences, the music was just so much second-rate pop.

When punk eventually calmed down from it's initial anarchy/destruction image and the bands fell into their respective slots, the influences began to emerge. The Stranglers' "Down in the Sewer," The Damned's wonderful "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," "Video Nasty" etc and The Dickies' LP "Dawn of the Dickies" with its Romero-type blue zombies adorning the cover, to name but a few.

These days, the tradition is carried on by the mindless heavy metal groups and their preoccupation with death - Helloween, Grave-digger, Slayer, Bathory, Ozzy and the occasional left-over punk offerings like The Cramps or Wendy O. Williams (Maggots: The record). Theatrical horror is not dead either. Check out the wonderfully sleazy W.A.S.P. or the more professional Iron Maiden.

And then there was Alice. The son of a minister, he was born Vincent Damon Furnier on February 4 1948. After incarnations as The Earwigs and The Spiders, the Alice Cooper Band first gained recognition in the late 60's for being able to empty a concert hall in minutes. Their attitude was one of complete opposition to the "Peace, love and apathy" of the hippies - more of noise hate and chaos. Frank Zappa ("Weasels Ripped My Flesh" and others) found them, signed them, recorded two unsuccessful, unprofessional albums and dropped them in a blaze of bad publicity.

Alice had already acquired a reputation for shock by dressing and making up as a woman, and later bringing live chickens on stage. He was rumoured to be biting their heads off and spitting blood at the audience. Although this was untrue, it was never denied - more publicity for the Alice Cooper machine.

So, as 1971 ticked around, Alice gained a new manager (Shep Gordon), a new producer (Bob Ezrin) and a new album "Love it to Death." A breakthrough for Alice and his band, the new producer created a tight sound, allowing Alice the full range of his vocal capabilities. They gained a massive chart success from the album, "I'm Eighteen" (for which Malcolm McLaren was said to have signed Sex Pistol Johnny Rotten whilst watching him mime to it). Also among the songs was a 6½ minute opus, "The Balled of Dwight Frye" dedicated to the diminutive Hollywood genre actor (Renfield in "Dracula" etc) who spent his last years in an insane asylum.

Money and notoriety fuelled Alice's creative juices to bring out a succession of weird and wonderful albums, including "Billion Dollar Babies" and "Killer." By this time the stage show was becoming even more bizarre. Alice sang to a large boa constrictor (a permanent fixture throughout his career) he chopped up baby dolls and the band tied him up in a straight jacket. Then there were the mock executions - the hanging or the electric chair and later, an early version of the guillotine, all played for maximum shock effects.

The taboo-breaking lyrics, too, mimicked the macabre stage show. We were given songs about death ("Killer"), masturbation ("Muscle of Love"), parental negligence ("Dead Babies"), necrophilia ("I Love the Dead"), the occult ("Black Juju"), religion ("Hallowed be my Name"), dentist horror ("Unfinished Sweet"), transvestism ("Mary-Ann"), sick things ("Sick Things"), even James Bond ("Man With the Golden Gun").

In 1974 Alice mutually disbanded the group, the remaining musicians forming Billion Dollar Babies and releasing two albums before fading into obscurity. Meanwhile, Alice's first foray into solo recordings was going well with "Welcome to my Nightmare," containing all his old quirkiness while leaving the heavier sound by the wayside. The album was a showcase for an Alice Cooper nightmare (no kidding!), with the stage show becoming an Alladin's cave of devils, demons, a giant cyclops and before-their-time video effects. To top it all, Vincent Price was brought in to add his dulcet tones to the record, with a monologue extolling the virtues of the Black Widow spider and her fatal bite.

The next album, "Alice Cooper goes to Hell" was just that, with Alice being condemned for his crimes to that hot place. He meets with the devil and negotiates his release, once again leaving the impression that it was all another nightmare. In the following years he mellowed out a little, settled down and released some average, but still listenable albums, including "From the Inside," the story of his incarceration into a drying out clinic (a mental asylum on the LP) for his alcohol addiction.



THE MAN BEHIND THE MAKEUP MEETS THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK.

He was still writing horror influenced material like "Tag, You're It" a humorous story of a woman being stalked by a psycho, and "Fresh Blood" about a neighbourly vampire. He was also still singing about the unmentionable - as in "Pass the Gun Around" (Russian roulette) and "leather Boots" (police brutality).

No stranger to cinema, he appeared in DIARY OF A MAD HOUSEWIFE, SEKTETTE, SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND and ROADIE, made a TV special, "Welcome to my Nightmare" (with Vincent price) and guested on many TV shows, including being a regular on "Hollywood Squares" for which he lost a lot of fans. He also sang "I am the Future" for the excellent teenage schoolwar film CLASS OF 1984. His latest album features "He's Back (the Man Behind the Mask)", the title song from FRIDAY THE 13TH PART 6 - JASON LIVES with Jason himself appearing in the video for the song. Then, in 1984, Alice was offered the starring role in a Spanish horror film, THE BITE. It was promptly shelved until last year when, to coincide with his world tour, it was released on video as MONSTER DOG.

The story concerns a rock star (Alice, who else?) and his friends when they drive out to a mysterious mansion he has just inherited. Various plot intricacies (?) include a family history of lycanthropy, a pack of vicious wild dogs and a posse out for Alice's blood, believing him to be a werewolf. The viewer is left with an "Is he - isn't he" situation (he is). The film itself is pretty dire, very badly dubbed with some dodgy special effects but Alice manages to rise above it all and puts in a superb performance.

And so, towards the end of 1986, Alice came full circle with his "Constrictor" album and "Nightmare Returns" tour. Here was a mighty sound created with the aid of guitarist/muscleman Kane Roberts (ex-heavy metal group Ratt) and, of course, Alice's inventive lyrics. The stage show borrowed heavily from previous tours with a couple of new tricks thrown in for good measure.

Once again Alice is condemned to hell/the mental asylum for his copious crimes - baby (doll) killing, wife beating and necrophilia - Alice keeps a corpse in his refrigerator. He is put in a straight jacket but escapes and strangles a nurse. From here the new material is showcased with the exceptional "Teenage Frankenstein." Alice rushes round the stage, collecting bits and pieces to construct a giant monster. Suddenly it springs to life and shuffles round to the pounding music, heading for its creator. After flooring Alice, the monster returns to its station and it only remains for Alice to deconstruct his creation.

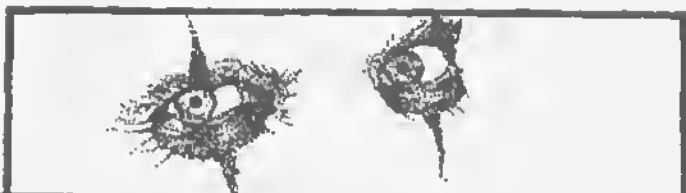
With all this added to his list of crimes he is caught and sentenced to death, paving the way for the ultimate horror. A huge

guillotine is brought on stage by his demons while the repenting Alice is placed on the block. "We have total realism now, even the head twitches when the blade comes down" said Alice in an interview. Apparently the blade was made of solid steel and checked every night just in case the real Alice's head was cropped. After the executioner has paraded the bloody head in front of the audience, everything darkens. Suddenly, Alice appears in top hat and tails for a rousing encore of his biggest hits, "School's Out," "Elected" and "Under my Wheels," regressing once again to the nightmare theme. The audience is left feeling that they have been watching a true legend and seen their very own live video nasty.

Alice Cooper has always been happy with his horror image and he can still chill an audience with his sinister presence. Long may he continue to do so.

ALBUMS

- 1969 PRETTIES FOR YOU
- 1970 EASY ACTION
- 1971 LOVE IT TO DEATH
KILLER
- 1972 SCHOOL' OUT
- 1973 BILLION DOLLAR BABIES
SCHOOL DAYS (reissue of first two albums as a double album)
- 1974 MUSCLE OF LOVE
ALICE COOPER'S GREATEST HITS
- 1975 WELCOME TO MY NIGHTMARE
- 1976 ALICE COOPER GOES TO HELL
- 1977 LACE AND WHISKY
THE ALICE COOPER SHOW (live)
- 1978 FROM THE INSIDE
- 1980 FLUSH THE FASHION
- 1982 ZIPPER CATCHES SKIN
- 1983 DA-DA
- 1986 CONSTRICTOR



POLICE 55



They won't let you see them but you can read about them in the pages of SAMHAIN! Continuing our regular look at the notorious nasties on Scotland Yard's hit list we come to THE BOGEY MAN and THE BURNING. It's finger-snippin' good!

THE BOGEY MAN (U.S. The BOOGIE MAN)
1980 84 minutes Vipro

BOGEY MAN director Ulli Lommel was a protege of the highly-respected Rainer Werner Fassbinder, and made the critically-praised TENDERNESS OF THE WOLVES (1974) - this tenderness was the sort that you would be well-advised not to try a little of, the film being a study of a Haarmann-type pederast and vampire. Perhaps this was indicative of the sleaze mentality that was to surface later.

The skids were really under Lommel's career when he went to America to make BLANK GENERATION and COCAINE COWBOYS for Andy Warhol. Not surprisingly, his stint at The Factory kindled in him a desire to do something more energetic, exciting and commercial. Virtually anything would be a step up from a Warhol film in these departments, but for Lommel this meant the short step from the fringe of art into full-blown exploitation cinema. His first offering in this vein was THE DEVONSHIRE TERROR starring Donald Pleasance, as these things often do. It's a story of a witch-hunting backlash against "Permissiveness." Gosh, just imagine that eh folks?

THE BOGEY MAN sees Lommel joining the rush to cash in on John Carpenter's HALLOWEEN (the most lucrative independent film of all time). The film opens with familiar-sounding tinkling music as Lommel's camera prowls around a familiar-looking house, inside of which naughty stuff is going on.

The lady involved spots her kids Willy and Lacey (but not the camera crew) peering through the window, so her lover chastises Willy MOMMIE DEAREST-style, tying him spread-eagled to a four poster bed. Freed by his sister, Willy stabs his tormentor to death with a carving knife. So far so good, but from here on the HALLOWEEN story is reversed - it's

the victim who becomes The Bogey Man, because not only does he like to roll stockings over his head, he's supernatural into the bargain. O.K., so Michael Myers can get up off a lawn after being stabbed in the eye with a coathanger - can he live in mirrors?

Two decades later, Lacey and Willy (a hulking mute) are haunted by the traumatic events of that night. Lacey's husband Jake takes her to see crumbly psychiatrist John Carradine. Under hypnosis, she spits, curses and threatens them in the voice of The Bogey Man (a combination of HALLOWEEN and THE EXORCIST - can't miss, right? Wrong!) Carradine prescribes a visit to the house where the killing took place, so Jake drives the reluctant Lacey out there, leaving Willy to muck out the barn. While he's doing it, the town flirt tries some body language on him. "I think it's cute that you can't talk" is her senaitive chat-up line. "It Makes you different from all the other boys." Not surprisingly, Willy reacts by lifting her against the barn wall and half throttling her. Concluding that a mirror was influencing him during this violent outburst, Willy goes around the house painting all the mirrors black.

If you think the story's been wiggly so far, wait till you get this: The old house is inhabited by a bunch of kids who don't seem to mind at all when a couple of strangers roll up and start "Poking around."

"Did you grow up on this farm?" asks one of the kids. "No, I'm a police-man" replies Jake - surely one of the greatest non-sequiters of all time. When Lacey enters the room where the dirty deed was done she sees the Bogey Man in the mirror, and smashes it.

Shame-faced, Jake takes Lacey home but not before he has collected the broken bits of mirror in a bag. The kids agree that not only is breaking a mirror bad luck, but it also frees everything the mirror has ever seen. A shard of glass starts glowing red as a heart beat appears on the soundtrack. One of the girls retires to the bathroom to get ready for a night of passion with her boyfriend. Psychos, even corporate ones, always seem to get enraged by teenage sex, and the kids are wiped out in three of the most ludicrous "Designer deaths" you'll ever see - the boy climbs up the side of the house only to be guillotined in a window frame, one of his sisters is attacked by a pair of scissors, the other battered by a cabinet door that snaps open by the power of the occult.

Jake re-assembles the mirror back home, with the inevitable result that characters are soon being dive-bombed by pitchforks. Lacey gets away from all this by taking her malodorous child fishing. As he dangles his feet off the prom we see a shard of glass stuck to the sole of his boot, and reflected light plays on the other side of the bay where some frisky teens are having a barbecue as a prelude to heavy petting. What happens next is definite proof that a screwdriver rammed into the back of the head and exiting through the mouth is an inval-

able aid to prolonged French kissing.

In the alleged climax Lacey has her blouse ripped off, ENTITY-style then a splinter of glass pierces her eye as the mirror bathes the house in red and green light, and dead characters fall out of every cupboard. Yup, the house is rocking with domestic problems. Lacey, whose double-glazed expression no-one has noticed yet, is nonchalantly doing the dishes. Jake scolds her "Lacey - Earnest and Helen are dead." "Well that'll be two less for supper" she coolly replies then spouts some more Boogey-talk. The door falls in and a priest appears, wielding a huge crucifix. As he attempts to yank the glass from her eye (a biblical parable, right?), someone off camera pours raspberry sauce over his bald patch (this memorable spectacle providing the pack shot). As the raspberry sauce reaches saturation point he plucks the glass out and staggers away, revealing the contents of the knife and fork drawer embedded in his back. We didn't actually see this happening, maybe the SFX man was on his lunch break - but they've ripped off everything else, so why not CARRIE? Feeling enough is enough, the survivors throw the mirror down a well, from which a fireball rises into the sky, and the house stops doing its impersonation of a disco.

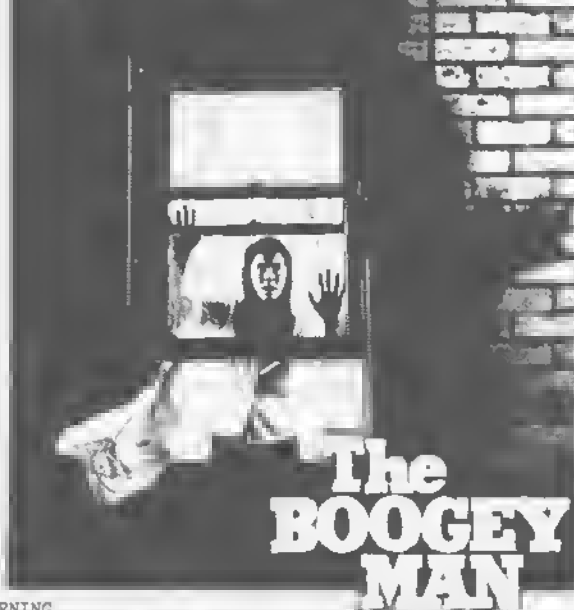
Willy regains the power of speech during this ordeal (i.e. he starts screaming his head off). The final scene involves Lacey and Willy looking forward to a bright future, but to no one's great surprise the last thing we see is a glowing piece of mirror. BOGEY MAN 2? You betcha.

The original film made big bucks (relative to its \$300,000 budget and quick shoot) for the ubiquitous Jerry Gross organisation, Lommel hesitated over making a sequel ("For fear of exploiting myself") but "Then one day some financiers came to see me and said 'Here's half a million dollars. We don't care what you do, just make sure it's called BOGEY MAN 2.'"

Only it isn't, it's called REVENGE OF THE BOGEY MAN (1982). According to Lommel, it's autobiographical: A Hollywood producer is making a film about The Bogey Man and throws a party with pieces of that mirror as its centre piece - "It is during these festivities that The Bogey Man makes his reappearance and kills everyone" (not beating about the bush eh?) "...I love the central idea of The Bogey Man not wanting to be exploited." Lommel is keen not to exploit himself, not to have his brainchild exploited, but doesn't seem so fussy about exploiting the public: THE REVENGE OF THE BOGEY MAN shamelessly re-uses footage from the first film (for which reason REVENGE also ended up on the "Nasties" list) - what on earth did they spend half a million on?

The BOGEY MAN films are the work of a director with a certain amount of talent who, noticing how far he has slipped, can't be bothered any more. He is making better-than-average home movies - Lommel even casts his family (under the aliases Suzanna and Nicholas Love). His excursion into the world of slick, empty American TV movies, BRAIN-WAVES, merely confirmed the impression of cynical complacency.

THE MOST TERRIFYING NIGHTMARE OF CHILDHOOD IS ABOUT TO RETURN!



THE BURNING
1981 87 minutes Thorn-EMI

THORN-EMI must have been thinking "Why us, Lord?" Though billed as "The most frightening of the manic films," THE BURNING is an identical example of the "Teen campers in peril" sub-genre spawned by the success of FRIDAY THE 13TH (1980) and it seems rather arbitrary for Scotland Yard to have singled it out for inclusion on their official "Video Nasties" list. The nubile (and some pre-nubile) skinny dippers are rather less attractive than their cousins over at Camp Crystal Lake, but their motivations are the same (those who argue that the teenagers in these things are unbelievable as characters because they are only interested in sex and drugs must mix with a better class of teenager than the ones I meet) and if anything they are even more reckless about roaming around in the woods late at night.

The production values are slightly lower than in Jason's slaughter-fests (Rick Wakeman's score sounds like its being pumped out on a Woolies organ - give me The Goblins anyway) but one thing that THE BURNING does share with FRIDAY THE 13TH is the make-up effects of Tom Savini, who took this job in preference to FRIDAY THE 13TH PART 2 because, he says, that film's out-of-wack storyline and continuity put him off - "Especially the idea that Jason was alive

In some lake for all that time" (He was also offered better money of course, and presumably it was a similar consideration that allowed him to overcome his philosophical objections and go to work on FRIDAY THE 13TH PART IV). In fact, pace Mr. Savini, THE BURNING and FRIDAY THE 13TH PART 2 are virtually interchangeable, though the credits, which list an unbelievably massive crew, insist that it took three people to write, then two to make a screenplay of what they see fit to describe as the "Original story."

In the pre-titles sequence the waggish campers of Camp Blackfoot set out to scare their obnoxious caretaker Cropsy with a worm-ridden skull containing a candle (readily available at all good stores or if Tom Savini is working for you). Unfortunately the gag results in Cropsy's bed catching fire and he becomes a human torch, leaping hot-foot into Lake Blackfoot (where presumably he met Jason and copped some licks on jumping out of lakes and coming back to life when everyone thinks the picture is finished). Cropsy winds up in hospital described by a sensitive orderly as "A fucking Big Mac, overdone!"

To no-one's great surprise, "Five years later" Cropsy is discharged with some sound advice - "I know you resent those kids, but try not to blame anyone." After five years cooped up in intensive care a young Cropsy monster's thoughts turn to what you'd expect them to turn to, so he nips off to the local red light area for a quickie. Even a prostitute gets a headache when she checks out Cropsy's charred visage, and when he presses his snit she succumbs to a fit of bad acting (she's not the only one - even by the standards of this sub-genre the acting is appalling). Enraged, Cropsy stabs her and pushes her through the window. Realising his true vocation, he high-tails it to the nearest Summer Camp, Camp Stonewater.

There's a veritable shoal of red herrings as we are introduced to the campers - the girls agonise over the state of their relationships while girls-mags and condoms are delivered to the boy's hut; bums are peppered with buck-shot, and amid much masturbation with the girls are referred to as "Prime meat" (how true, how true); then there's the camp wimp Alfred, spying on girls in the shower - which could be a Hitchcock joke (have you ever noticed how the girls in these things seem to spend forever soaping the breasts but never wash any lower down? Not an ideal recipe for personal hygiene, I would have thought).

Next up is the campfire sequence you'll know off by heart if you ever saw FRIDAY THE 13TH PART 2. Todd, the hunky camp counsellor, scares the new kids with the story of Cropsy, stalking the woods with a pair of shears (turns out to be a good guess!) "He's out there watching...waiting. So don't look - he'll see you. Don't breathe - he'll hear you. Don't move...YOU'RE DEAD!" at which point some insensitive ejjit jumps out of the bushes to give them a scare.

It's not till the kids go on a canoe trip that things really hot up for gorehounds. Cropsy interprets the "Have-sex-and-die" rule somewhat broadly, for the first victim backs out of sex in the creek and atill undergoes a DIY tracheotomy as she searches for her knickers, blood gurgling out over her breasts. The kids wake next morning to find that the canoes are missing so, dyb, dyb, dyb, they improvise a raft and set off back to camp.

One of the canoes drifts into view, but when they paddle over to it up jumps Cropsy, brandishing shears. With a dazzling display of dexterous hand-speed he stabs heads, slashes throats, pierces breasts and crops the fingers off a guy who raises his hands in a protective gesture. It was the latter amputation that prompted the police to bust the tape ("We caught 'em red-handed M'Lud!"), which in turn caused Thorn-EMI to recall THE BURNING and get out their own shears, re-issuing a version seven seconds shorter. But, horror of horrors, they managed to return to the shops many copies with the offending seven seconds intact, so THE BURNING was withdrawn all over again. In the aftermath of this fiasco Thorn-EMI got the jitters and started censoring their product left, right and centre, including SUSPIRIA, a particularly brutal carve-up of HALLOWEEN 3 SEASON OF THE WITCH, even EMMANUELLE 2! Then again, they fared better than VIPCO, whose ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS was unacceptable to Scotland Yard in either version. Incidentally you can still give the censors the finger - if you're handy with the freeze-frame you'll get a couple of frames of digits flying through the air.

Back at Camp Stonewater the discovery of the wrecked raft, a floating arm and fingerless corpses popping up in people's faces leads to another outburst of bad acting ("This is no trick - just look at those kids!") Elsewhere copulating teenies are variously slaughtered in their sleeping-bags and pinned to trees with shears through their throats (c.f. Harry Crosby in FRIDAY THE 13TH).

Surprising Cropsy in mid-slash, wimpy Alfred is pursued in POV Cropsy-vision to a handy-dandy dianssed mine, in which the socko-boffo climax takes place. Todd charges to the rescue, and a flashback reveals that "Young Todd" was one of the pranksters who set off this whole unlikely chain of events in the first place. Well slap my face! Who cares? Cropsy does, and with a fine sense of poetic justice he goes after Todd with an oxy-acetylene burner, leaving the viewer to ponder certain questions, e.g. While in hospital, how had Cropsy kept tabs on Todd's movements? Even more perplexing, how did Todd get a job as a camp counsellor when a mere five years earlier he had been responsible for broiling a camp caretaker?

Things are looking bad for Todd, but Alfred proves himself a man at the crucial moment, burying the shears in Cropsy's back. He falls so readily that you lose 50 credibility points if you don't guess that as Alfred and Todd leave arm-in-arm, Cropsy rises for another go. An axe in the face makes his comeback a short one, and for good measure they set fire to him again.

The film closes with a reprise of the fireside scene (well clean my pants!) but any frisson of terror that this might have generated is stifled by the lamentable acting of those concerned. One significant way in which the film differs from FRIDAY THE 13TH is that it never spawned a BURNING 2,3,4,5, etc ad nauseum. Ain't that a shame?

NEXT ISSUE: CONTAMINATION and DEAD AND BURIED

two different notions of the unconscious, the Freudian and the Jungian. Yes, that's right. Specifically it's the idea - and this brings us straight back to The Moors Murders - that by rejecting atrocities as monstrous and absolutely nothing that we could ever personally be capable of, we are in effect repressing it and making it break out in some worse form later on. One needs to point out to people again that there was this very scarring experiment conducted in one of the American universities a few years ago whereby people were told that they were taking part in an experiment about the effects of pain on people who were getting questions wrong - the "Subjects" were in fact actors who were not suffering any pain at all. Anyway, most of the people taking part in the experiment would go on beyond the point where the "Subjects" were apparently in great agony - so long as someone said "This is to assist in an experiment" they were able to carry on. We are all capable of it, this is what we have to believe.

It's the fascist principle, isn't it? The abdication of the super ego to a charismatic figure.

Yeah, well, fascism is probably another of the underlying themes I've been treating of as the threat in many of my stories - whereas in many traditional horror stories it's often some kind of threat to the established order, in my stories it's much more likely to be the effect of a desire for order at any cost. So whether this be fascism in THE PARASITE...

On HORRIDGE...

...in THE FACE THAT MUST DIE - schizophrenia is in a sense another way of trying to impose a pattern whatever the consequences - Yes... we're getting in quite deep here, but this seems to me to be the movement of contemporary horror fiction that is radical - we're also getting something of a backlash.

You've talked about horror which is reassuring. I've noticed that THE DOLL seems to end on a note of reconciliation, whereas the others seem to be getting bleaker. OBSESSION I found very disturbing.

Yes, that's interesting, I thought that I was getting much more optimistic - possibly it's because I'm getting more optimistic that it's getting more disturbing. THE FACE THAT MUST DIE seems pretty unreservedly pessimistic.

That was the start of it.

Yeah that's right, but in novels such as INCARNATE or OBSESSION or THE HUNGRY MOON the people are more affectionately hewn, I'm getting fonder of them, which makes it all the worse when these things happen to them.

INCARNATE is a very "Ware" novel and some of the others are getting that way. Discussing your earlier stuff in his DANSE MACABRE Stephen King talks about you having a "Cold" line of prose.

In THE DOLL, he's absolutely right, yeah, in THE FACE THAT MUST DIE too. My stuff is getting more humanised, if you like, but I suppose however optimistic I think I'm getting, the essential pessimism is not going to be cheated.

There's the science fiction writer Maurice Fox in OBSESSION - I had this horrible feeling that you were talking about yourself.

Not particularly. In what he gets up to?

Not in his drug-dealing, no, but in his cynicism.

Ah no, that wasn't me, or maybe I'm not being sufficiently honest with myself to realise it - the notion that the fiction doesn't mean anything, no I would never subscribe to that, I would rather subscribe to the notion that it does mean something, actually.

Surely, I'm not making myself very clear here, I didn't mean that, what I'm talking about is his black world view, the inevitability of Armageddon.

Oh, yeah...

I must admit, that's how I feel sometimes.

Oh yes, I wouldn't deny that, I think he probably was speaking for me to that extent.

I enjoyed all the books immensely, but OBSESSION was one I have reservations about. It seems to me that possibly you set yourself an exercise with that one, to see how you got on. For instance you moved the story away from Liverpool, where you have very strong roots, and for which you have a very strong feel. I felt there was something missing - the kids sent their letters off and it wasn't clear where they were going on to whom.

Well in a sense they don't - they all fly across the sea.

Like the Runes in NIGHT OF THE DEMON/"Casting the Runes."

Yeah, exactly.

Did you set out consciously to do something different from what had gone before?

Not entirely, no, only in the sense that possibly I wanted to strip away what you might call "The typical Campbell" and see what was left, so in a sense you were right.

I had a feeling that something like that was going on.

Well there's no Campbell trademarks, there's no urban decay...well, there's a little bit I suppose. Part of the point is that the setting is not necessarily very important, I mean whereas in most of the books in some way the supernatural element or the fantastic element does proceed from the setting, in OBSESSION it doesn't, it could pretty well happen anywhere. I suppose it wasn't an attempt to do anything particularly, it was an attempt to tell that particular story about those particular people and on that particular theme, which was the theme I got from watching ROCKY III basically. To that extent it was about as fast as I've ever got

through a novel, certainly in terms of getting the broad outlines of it very immediately. I suppose it was more trying to discover how little horror you could put into a novel and still have it...

Yes, the appearances of the ghostly granny are few and far between.

That's right I think it was - it certainly was - partly reaction against what seemed to me to be the sort of mindless escalation of horror that a lot of writers seemed to be getting into - trying to top everything that had gone before seems to me fundamentally rather pointless. It's one thing to try and compete with yourself and do better than you did last time, but actually trying to take on the entire field, I don't know if there's ever going to be an ultimate horror story, it goes in phases...

It's like thinking you can set a record for the 100 metres that will never be broken.

That's right. As far as I'm concerned OBSESSION was just a novel. I always have reservations about everything I write, in particular, with the case of OBSESSION when I finished it and sent it away I wondered if the publishers were going to say "Well, we like it, but we'd like you to put in a bit more horror," I wouldn't have wanted to actually, and as it turned out they didn't.

How much of a final say do you have and how much do you have to change things for the publishers.

I don't... meaning "Yes" I do have the final say. It's not that usual for editors... I suppose it depends on how much respect they have for the author but they will not generally impose their view on the writer, if they did that very often of course they'd have writers leaving them in droves probably. Which is not to say I'm not in favour of working with an editor, I am. I think it's a very useful part of the process. The editor can actually notice things that I can overlook, partly because I'm close to it, or they might see things that are just not apparent to me.

The most extreme example, I would think, well I've never had anything quite so spectacular before or since, but my pseudonymous book, which I wrote as Jay Ramey (which is meant to be as obvious as possible to anyone who saw the cover), CLAW or NIGHT OF THE CLAW in America. I have the three central characters, the two parents and the young girl, and they become influenced by the talisman of the leopard man cult whereby you sacrifice your first-born as part of the initiation ceremony. There's little violence in the book, it's actually a book about the vulnerability of children rather than any graphic dramatisation of that. In the first draft - I still don't quite believe I'm telling you this - I found I actually had no scenes from the little girl's point of view, such a basic error that it seems impossible that anyone with a modicum of knowledge of how to write a novel could do it. This is how close I was up against it, but I couldn't see that that was what I was omitting to do. I started writing it too quickly because I was commissioned to do it and I actually came up with the plot and started in on it too fast before I really had time to let it take its own form.

And that was quite late in the day?

Yes, after I'd finished it! I actually had to take out maybe 40,000 words of it and re-do them. It was a very considerable improvement, so it was worth doing. Something else - I'm going into all sorts of details of craft here - but this is the one in which I learned not to plot too much in advance, because that way you don't leave yourself enough breathing space or enough room to trust your instincts as to what you should be doing, and if you've already committed yourself in your own head as much as to the publisher as to what you should do, then you won't be able to change that.

It's like erecting a building on shaky foundations.

Exactly. So these days I've come to plot in advance less and less.

You've talked about writing INCARNATE, about "Images floating up," it was like the surrealists used to talk about "Automatic writing" and so on.

Yes, I certainly got some very curious images that just seemed to come up out of nowhere like the postage stamps that began to talk, for instance, which I don't think would have fitted into anything I had written earlier. That was also the point at which I decided that even if it wasn't particularly scary, if it seemed to me to fit in I'd put it in anyway and let the reader decide how they were going to respond to it. I decided I wasn't going to expend undue energy to direct your response to what I was doing. I mean THE PARASITE for instance seems to me fairly obvious at times to be written out of a willingness to be as scary as possible. I think there are scenes in there that are just cranked up beyond their potential, basically.

Tell us about THE PARASITE then, which hits one blow up?

Not so much specific scenes as the whole feel of it, I think. Put it this way - you have the prologue, in which you have a fairly strong scene in which the protagonist as a young girl becomes a victim of the seance, that's the first chapter. The second chapter calms down for just maybe a couple of pages, then you have her encounter in the department store with the bald man who crops up later in the book, which Steve King actually cites as a sort of psychedelic image, which I am sure it is, it does have the sort of uncomfortable, luridly-lit intensity.

The talking postage stamps are very psychedelic.

Oh that is, but I think that fits better into INCARNATE than that scene with the bald man fits, that early, into THE PARASITE. You see, it's too much too soon. The prologue, that puts you through it and you've hardly had time to take a breath when here you are with more of the same a





RAMSEY CAMPBELL

couple of pages further on. It does really seem to me that if I'd been doing then now, I would have left that alone & blt.

What really knocked me out when I read *THE PARASITE* was that you start in on the climax so early in the book, and it's brilliantly sustained right through to the end.

Yes, I did have fun with that last 100 pages, it just keeps coming, that's right.

It's very impressive.

I have to admit that *THE PARASITE* was written to some extent as an attempt at a commercial success after *THE FACE THAT MUST DIE* had been declared unpublishable by everybody who looked at it, too grim to publish, which is why it didn't appear for some years. I was trying to design *THE PARASITE* pretty well in terms of what the horror story was perceived as being in those days - which was to some extent, innocent characters being menaced from something outside, but of course the story isn't about that at all, it's about a woman becoming more and more aware of her own dominant male personality so to that extent I was trying to be more true to myself than trying to write a timely best seller.

At times it reads almost like a feminist tract - the account of her growing self-awareness was exhilarating.

I suppose it actually ends up being closer to what I felt than I could imagine. It's probably not dishonest, it also builds in... you'll recall the characters actually have discussions about whether they should become commercial or not which is very much the process I was going through while I was writing the book, so I suppose it does at least try to be as honest with the reader as it can.

You wrote *THE PARASITE* in 1980 and it came out in 1985.

The edition you have was published in 1985, in fact it had been published in 1980 as...

TO WAKE THE DEAD...

...TO WAKE THE DEAD, right, so it was written in the late seventies, give it a year or so between that and seeing it in print.

Was that just a little change?

Actually, the final chapter is different. In *TO WAKE THE DEAD* in the final chapter originally the protagonist simply breaks up with her husband and becomes increasingly convinced that he is still somehow involved with what she has shaken off. In fact the original ends with her beginning to feel out her psychic talents again to see if she can, you know, somehow combat it. Oddly enough that's very much like the end of a Jim Herbert novel isn't it? I mean *THE DARK* ends pretty much like that, and *THE MAGIC COTTAGE*.

There's another ending that's got more pessimistic.

Well in a sense it has and in a sense it hasn't, I mean she obviously destroys the...

It cuts both ways

Yes, it cuts both ways.

THE NAMELESS was revised from 1981 to 1985, I was wondering what the changes were, what motivated them, and how close they came to accomplishing what you wanted.

This is just my nit-picking creativity to be honest. In the final version now you've got the scene in which Barbara is put on to the occult group in Glasgow at a newspaper kiosk where she notices some occult magazines - in the original these occult magazines were lying around in the hotel where she was staying and she traces them to one of the staff who's getting them from her mother who doesn't particularly believe in them herself but just leaves them lying around - and this is how she gets on to the occultists. I mean it seemed an awfully contrived way of getting them, you just don't pick up copies of "Fate" and "Prediction" in the average hotel, it seemed unnecessarily elaborate.

So you were making it leaner and meaner.

Yes, that's right, the other odd thing that occurred to me when I'd written it... in the original the member of staff is rather unhelpful and cynical and so on, whereas the new version - again what you were saying earlier - had just got warmer, the general feeling with the two characters which isn't there in the first version.

I must confess I've only read the later version.

I wouldn't bother seeking out the earlier one, it's not so different.

You were talking on TV the other night about the decline of Christianity ("Religion has gone, we're all face to face with the abyss, maybe there really isn't anything else except something very much more terrible than we were led to believe"): And of course you feature Kleister Crowley implicitly in *THE DOLL WHO ATE HIS MOTHER*, explicitly in *THE PARASITE* - and your use of that word "Panic" meaning literally "Dread in the face of nature."

Yes, but on the other hand I'm fundamentally a sceptic in the midst of

a field which in theory works in terms of... prejudices? Yes, prejudices, which is another reason why I've done *THE HUNGRY MOON*, which is explicitly an attack on that. Then again, my works do seem to be getting much more theological as they go along - maybe I sense that the gates are going to gape for me in due course and I'd better put me stuff more in order before I go. *OBSESSION* is I suppose the one where the theological issues really begin to get themselves raised, and you're certainly going to find this in *THE HUNGRY MOON*, but equally in *THE INFLUENCE*, since it deals with the ghostly, it seems to me that I had to deal with life after death and what the possibilities were. You may actually find out that that comes out pretty bleak by the conclusion as well.

There was an extraordinary sequence in *THE PARASITE*, with "The fungal church" - very impressive.

Yes, yes, the work of a deranged mind.

Do you think you will get increasingly theological then?

It may be, I dunno, I can't predict where I'm going next. It does seem that there's some connection between consecutive books but whether there will be a direct theological progression at this stage I don't know - maybe I'll be born again, I would tend at the moment to borrow the line J.K. Potter uses when people knock at the door, he describes himself as a "Born again atheist."

Philip K. Dick is a big favourite of mine and with Dick I get the impression that as his concerns become more and more theological, the quality of his work takes a real dip, I don't know if you'd agree with that.

I'm inclined to agree with you, yes, but I think that this is partly because he comes close to being "Born again" doesn't he, though he doesn't quite lose the urge to questloo.

Actually Dick was baptised into the Episcopal Church as an adult. He saw this as the solution to the visions that haunted him, the degenerative forces that operated in the universe, personified as the Form Destroyer in *A MAZE OF DEATH* - he actually saw these entities: It would seem he was ingesting certain substances.

He did it once, but...

He didn't like it.

Right.

You need to be a seminarian to understand his final novels.

Right, you're not going to find that in my later books, my work is relatively accessible on that level. You can go back to one of my favourite writers, Graham Greene - I think that the religion on the whole was out that obtrusive there, but the preoccupations are underlying it. So perhaps this is me going back to my roots again.

Speaking of your roots, what about this Liverpool connection... *SAM-HAIN*'s selling very well up here.

Oh good.

What is it about this place, in terms of you and Clive Barker, etc?

I dunno... we had the Liverpool comedians of the fifties, sixties and seventies and now things have got so much grimmer that we have the Liverpool horror writers of the eighties. Then again, horror and humour have so much in common that perhaps we're just the darker side, just supplying the chillier laugh. Both of us actually like to tell a lot of jokes in the course of our stories. As far as I'm concerned Liverpool has always been what the stories have been about, just go and look at them.

Edmund Hall in *THE DOLL* says that Liverpool is a dump you have to leave if you want to succeed, but you would seem to be a pretty good counter-indication to that, you stayed at home and did very well.

That's right, obviously I can't piss on the place, it's kept me in settings all my life, that's the last thing I should do. No, actually I'm very fond of the place, I wouldn't want to move away.

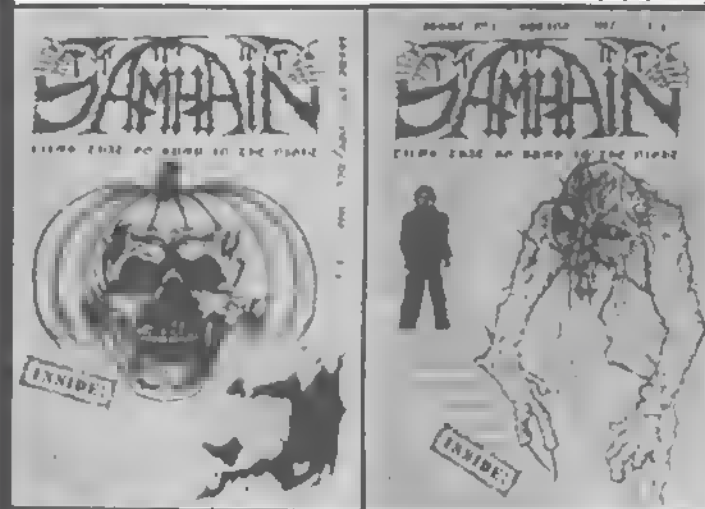
Could you write anywhere else?

I've certainly written while I've been away, I always take a novel with me if I'm writing one.

With Liverpool as a spiritual base?

Yeah, this is where my roots are and I suspect this is where they're going to plant me when I can't wield a pen anymore.

BACK ISSUES...



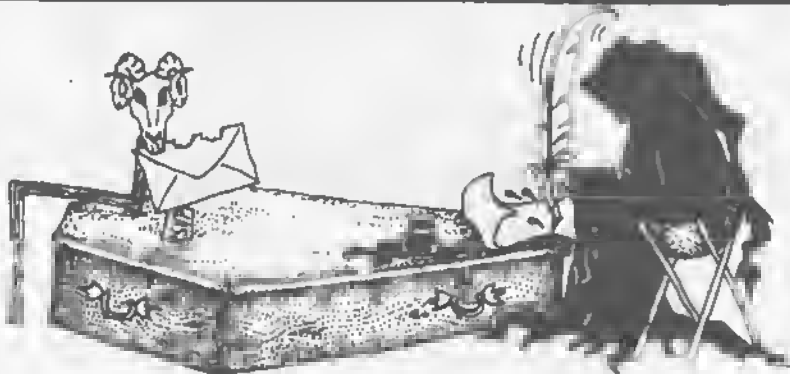
ISSUE 1 includes: The films of David Cronenberg, missing scenes from Keroff's *FRANKENSTEIN*, *THE LIVING DEAD AT THE MANCHESTER MORGUE*, *FRIDAY THE 13TH*, *QUATER MASS*, the original *INVADERS FROM MARS*, Video "Nasties" ... and more.

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Dear Samhain,

Such as Pamela Armstrong tried to give horror, its fans, and SAMHAIN a roasting (with nothing to act as fuel, just blind prejudice), she did serve to attract publicity. I happened to catch one piece by accident and so was interested when I saw the magazine. Were it not for having seen Pamela's show I would have probably ignored SAMHAIN, but it provoked interest and the proprietor of my local comic shop sang its praises and now I'm hooked.

The articles are clear and concise and very much to the format that I like. Pam Richards' "Sam Hain: The Hooded One" is excellent (esp. "There can be only one.")

Unlike most editorials yours remain interesting and, with Sam's Snippets, provide something with which to whet the appetite.

The letters column is well laid out and none (with the exception of this) have been too sycophantic. Issue two's EVIL DEAD had a marked improvement in the art, but I'm not too sure about its actual suitability for the magazine.

Police 55 is hilarious. I have seen many "Video Nasties" whilst in Germany and most of them are more amusing than a "Carry On" e.g. DRILLER KILLER. Others such as I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE may have been violent (well actually they were definitely violent), but were very good films (despite or because of, that violence). Pity that we are all too warped to make up our own viewing decisions, thank God for Mrs. Whitehouse.

In answer to your questions:

1) Yes, I would subscribe.

2) Please review horror novels, perhaps listing other novels by the author, especially since they are often under different publishers. I was going to slag down the art, despite my own inability, but then it improved with No.2, so maybe its just resolving printing problems.

Yours

L.R. Gellissen

Leigh

WMT IHS.

We'll be starting a fiction review section in issue four. Be there!

Dear Samhainers Gullidge,

At a modest horror film festival in Amsterdam I picked up issue one of SAMHAIN. Despite the tough competition from other mags and fanzines displayed I chose your fanzine. Why? Because it contained a review of Argento's PHENOMENA.

Somewhere in 1982 I saw INTERNO on videocassette while on vacation in Germany and I can tell you that it blew me away. Everything I had always been looking for in aesthetics was, and is, there. INTERNO is sheer beauty. It may not come as a surprise to you that from then on my life has changed entirely - I had found my "Messiah of Aesthetics."

I've been following Dario Argento's career ever since, despite the fact that no one has ever heard from him in The Netherlands and that I had to get all the Argento articles from foreign magazines, most of which I had never heard of. I still don't know why Brian De Palma has risen to world-fame (or notoriety...) while Argento still has distribution problems (remember the sad affair with Twentieth Century Fox and INTERNO). Argento's films are wondrous works of art while De Palma's flicks are well-made sleaze pictures (which doesn't mean I don't like his films, but it's the lack of class and honesty that makes them fall squarely into the "High-tech sleaze" category).

Although I had mixed feelings with PHENOMENA (I guess everyone who saw it did) I tremendously enjoyed the well-written review by John Martin in issue one. I feel that he is one of the few that really understands Argento's "Paintings on celluloid." Thanks to John Martin for taking the time to do such a well-considered piece of writing. I hope to see more and longer Argento articles from him in the future. How about a retrospect look at INTERNO?

Well, I hope to hear or read from you soon and don't forget: Never mind the shoestring budget - it's the labour of love that counts!!

Cordially yours,

Oliver Kerkdyk,

Enschede,

Netherlands.

Stay tuned Oliver. Coming up in issue five will be John Martin's definitive look at the career of Dario Argento. Should be worth waiting for. Readers may like to know that as well as being a bit of an Argento buff, Oliver's also a dab hand with a pen as his contribution From Beyond in the centre page portrait gallery of this issue shows.

Dear SAMHAIN,

Thankyou for existing! As an utterly devoted follower of all horror I find your magazine excellent. Until now I've only had good old Fangoria to read, but, being British, your magazine seems so less distant. The format is pleasing to the eye and is refreshingly original. Pam Richards artwork is enjoyable to look at and certainly seems to show an aptness for the genre. I also like the theme drawings by Gordon Finlayson and Pam's hilarious Sam Hain ("Yo Freddy! Lay five on me my man!")

Another favourite is the Police 55 article which should provide black humour-located reviews on a wide range of El Sico films in the future.

I have a Golden Dog Roll nomination which is for (surprise, surprise) the British Board of Film Censors. As to which particular act of fascism I am referring to, it is this: How can the BBFC allow FRIDAY THE 13TH to be re-released totally uncensored (not that I'm complaining) and in the same month take back copies of BASKET CASE and THE HILLS HAVE EYES for further censoring (THE HILLS HAVE EYES!)?

Just a thought, other magazines have often done zombie specials, werewolf specials etc. You might like to try.

Stay Sane inside Insanity.

Riff Raff

Middlesbrough,

Cleveland.

Dear John,

In answer to the question of life, "What did Jamie Lee Curtis say at the end of HALLOWEEN?" Well, I hold the answer.

In the book of the movie by Curtis Richards (no prizes for guessing, it's a false name) it reads:

"Laurie's nails dug into his shoulder as she stared like a soldier in shell shock at the empty place on the lawn. "It was the Bogeyman, wasn't it?" she murmured.

"As a matter of fact," Loomis replied, "It was."

Best wishes to the future on an excellent magazine. Number one next to Fangoria. The British one coming.

Yours Faithfully,

Michael Ceates Jr.

Locharbriggs,

Dumfries,

Scotland.

Thanks Michael but I think if you watch the film you'll see that she certainly doesn't say: "It was the Bogeyman" and as for the "Wasn't it" I've no idea where Curtis Richards got that from. New readers to SAMHAIN are probably wondering what the hell we're on about. Well we've got an explosive argument developing in the office as to just what Jamie Lee Curtis and Donald Pleasence say after the latter has dispatched Michael Myers with six shots from his revolver (Incidentally if you listen you'll hear he fires seven shots in the remake of the scene at the start of HALLOWEEN II). Thanks to everyone who bothered to write in with their verdict. My favourite came from Philip Collins of London who reckons that Jamie Lee's a bit of a disco freak and is in fact saying: "Where's the boogie, man!" Get down to the beat Loomis.



O.K. YOU TWO, JUST WHAT DID YOU SAY?

Dear John,

Thankyou. I've been looking for a replacement magazine since my beloved Halls of Horror kicked the proverbial bucket (for the second time) and you seem to fit the bill very nicely indeed. I tried F.J. Ackerman's Monster-Land, but that seems to focus on fantasy and SF more than on horror and Fangoria was full of the "Splatter" type of film, so neither were really suitable for me. Then you came along.

You seem to have taken your style from Helt & by having a comic strip adaptation (what will the next one be?) and Ramsey Campbell (although I do find his stuff hard to read at the best of times). The art in your EVIL DEAD strip is poor and the layout of the strip in issue two was very hard to follow and hard to understand just what was going on, but, having said this, I found part one immensely enjoyable.

What age group are you aiming for? I find your articles very adult-like in their approach, but your cartoon character is childishly drawn and unfunny (except the FRIDAY THE 13TH cartoon). Please limit him to his page three comic strip.

Despite what Mr. Harris said in issue two, I find Gordon Finlayson's artwork of a high standard and adds to the atmosphere of the magazine immensely. Concerning whether you should include novels in your Book of Bedtime section: Yes, but please, no Guy N. Smith books and how about a rating at the end of the review (e.g. suspense interest and overall rating.)

Perhaps you could make the next cover a colour one. Surely this would not cost that much more as the cover already has colour on (even if it is only one). Finally if you ever start up a subscription offer, I would love one.

Keep it up,
David Candler
West Denton,
Newcastle.

Taking your points in order David, the next comic strip won't be an adaptation but an original character called MASSACRE MAC by Steve Wood. Mac will make his debut in issue four and take it from me...he's weird! The age group question is an interesting one. I've had letters from readers in their early teens and letters from those in their forties and all seem to like the mag so we're not really aiming for a specific age. I started watching horror films at the age of 12 (I'm now 25) and I was just as enthusiastic then as I am now about the genre and judging from the post bag this seems to be the way with most fans. O.K. so I do horror films now and then...I can handle it.

Re Sam Hain the cartoon character I levelled the charge of childishness at his creator Pam Richards and she said you're a heap of pooh and you can't play in her garden anymore so nah nah ne nah nah. Incidentally Sam is one of the most popular parts of the mag so you better get used to him. Take my word for it, a colour cover does cost a lot more and even if I could afford one I'd be reluctant to spend money on it, preferring instead to increase the number of pages. Anyone, with enough money, can stick an expensive wrapping on a product but it's what's inside that really counts. However what do the rest of you think? And with that I'll shut up as these are meant to be two pages of your views and not mine.

Dear John,

Thank you for the copy of SAMHAIN which I must say, is a worthy and highly-inspiring tribute to the much-loved genre. There is no doubt as to the quality of your product, and I could of course, bore you tedious with superlatives - though your (and not forgetting your contributors') dedication and love for the subject matter comes through in a fine manner. In my opinion, that's the most important factor in the production of a fanzine. A lot of your published letters have noted you on your professionalism - and as far as I'm concerned, the magazine could be cheap, poorly-printed and badly typed. But as long as the dedication is there, it'll be a sure winner - and SAMHAIN would seem overloaded with good-spirited enthusiasm (it's worth remembering when you fall on bad times).

In the immortal words of one impressionable young reader: May you have at least one Silver Bullet left!

Eddie Murphy,
Cannlyne,
Glasgow,
Scotland.

Dear John,

I have immensely enjoyed the first two issues and want to offer some praise and criticism on them.

The parts I have so far enjoyed the most are Police 55 and the Unique Visions of John Carpenter and David Cronenberg. The film reviews are very fair. (I disagreed with the review of ALIENS but began to be convinced, then agree after reading it a few more times - not nearly as good as ALIEN). Sam's Snippets are also great.

However I would agree with readers who didn't like THE EVIL DEAD strip, the art is good but the item doesn't do the film justice, it needs more space which is too precious to lose from other parts of SAMHAIN. Again the full page pictures by Gordon Finlayson are good but seem a bit pointless without appropriate text. They seem to take up a lot of space.

Finally, I was glad to see SAMHAIN for sale in Edinburgh in the Science Fiction Bookshop. Good to see you in beside Fangoria and Starlog!

I look forward to issue three.
Stephen McKean,
Constonphine,
Edinburgh,
Scotland.

I'm glad to see it on sale in Edinburgh too Stephen. I sent them the first two issues to see if they would stock them and received no reply. Thankfully we've now got a proper distributor who can obviously reach the parts I couldn't!

Dear Mr. Gullidge,

I bought SAMHAIN 2 yesterday from a shop called TIMESLIP in Newcastle and although I haven't had time to finish reading it I must put fingers to keyboard and enthuse a bit. Despite being a horror fantasy fan for at least 16 years, I've seen very few publications like SAMHAIN.

I like your title - is it a name from Lovecraft (I confess I'm not that familiar with his stuff), or is it just old English for "The Hooded One?" As far as the fanzines I have seen your content is just as fascinating as Little Shoppe of Horrors or Tsee Screen, and your presentation is better. Professional publications like Starburst obviously score higher on presentation, but their features are not as consistently interesting, and they also cost more!

I'm particularly enjoying the Ramsey Campbell interview, the PEEPING TOM feature, the examination of Lovecraft and the book and film reviews. The letters column too is a vital feature - maybe you can extend this in future issues, once you've built up a readership.

I don't subscribe to the Gifford/Halliwel dictum that oldies are always best, but I wouldn't like to see you turn the mag into a black and white Fangoria either. I think the balance in SAMHAIN at the moment (with old and new, books, films and video) is just right. The occasional feature on TV programmes would be nice - of course you have to wait until they show something in the horror fantasy field, which isn't very often!

Best Wishes
John Hudson,
Gateshead,
Tyne and Wear.

You're right about the lack of genre TV there John although you will see a brief mention of a new Channel 4 series in SAM'S SNIPPETS. The title, as I mentioned in issue one (copies still available) SAMHAIN is the Celtic word for Halloween.

Dear John,

Just a line to say a few words. Overall impression was very professional for an amateur magazine, if a little untidy. For a charge an editorial that is actually interesting. I liked most of the content, especially the Ramsey Campbell interview - one of my favourite authors.

I honestly don't know what Pamela Armstrong is talking about. If you offered a source of "Nasties" for sale then yes, you would be breaking the law, but by talking about them? When people usually talk about "Nasties" I invariably haven't even heard of them so it came as a surprise to find I'd seen both AXE and BLOODY MOON.

Fair comments were made about both seeing as how neither are really worth the rental price (when you could rent them that was). I think this slot would benefit from more personal opinion - what you thought of the film, whether it deserves to be labelled a "Nasty" etc.

I would indeed like to see fiction included in your book reviews though keep up the coverage of reference works. With so many available and more coming out regularly it is nice to know which are worth the asking price.

Steven Hutchinson,
Conky,
Northants.

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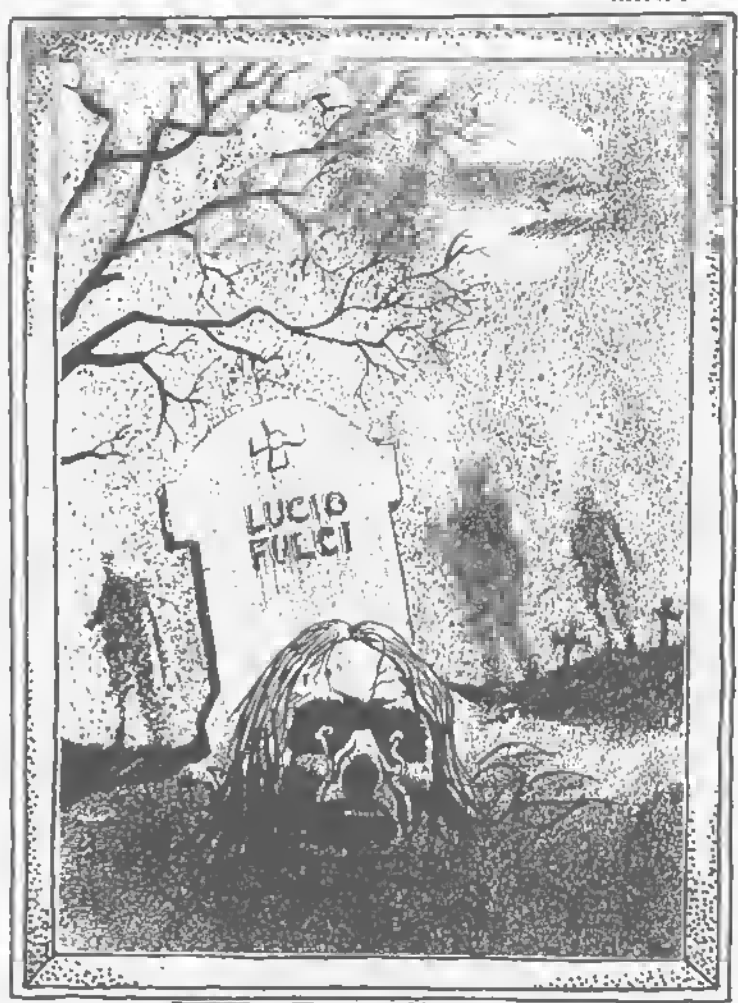
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IAN WARD



MARK DELANEY



GORDON FINLAYSON



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THE PORTRAIT GALLERY



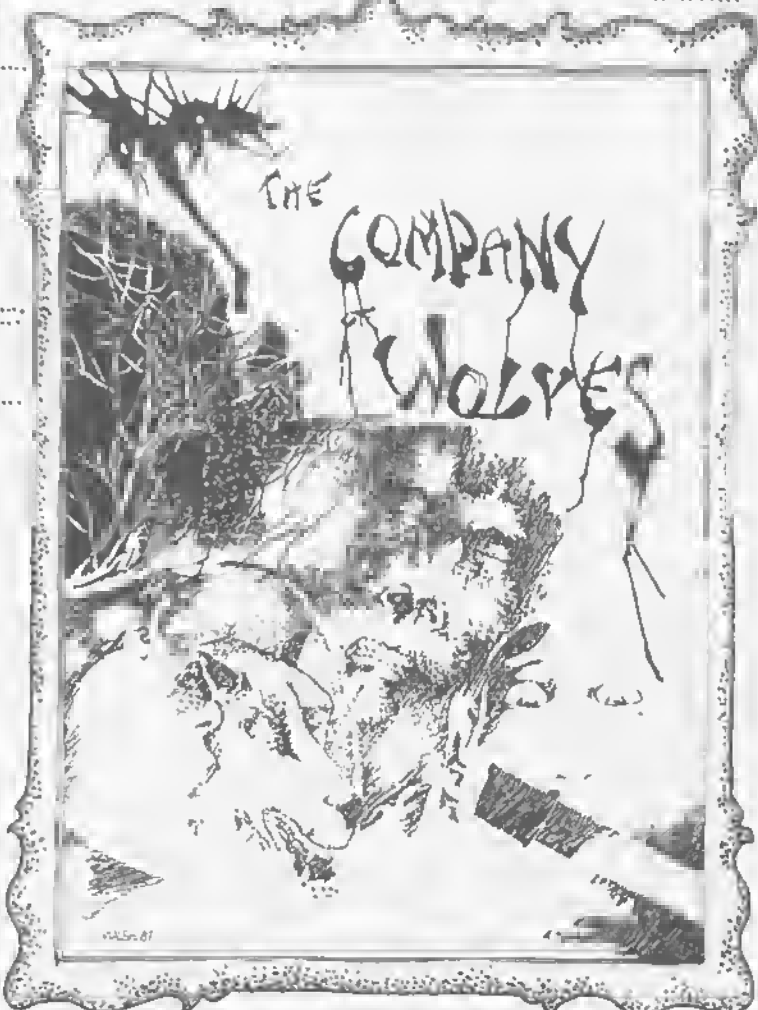
DAVID CHAPPELL



OLIVER KERKDYK



ALAN GRIER



CHRISTOPHER WALSH



MASTER

OR

MADMAN?

Blue Velvet

THE FILMS OF
DAVID
LYNCH.

BY MICHAEL WESLEY.

PAM.

WITH precisely the same bizarre directorial talent to emerge during the late seventies/early eighties, belongs to the American David Lynch. After all, this man's first feature makes the films of Greenberg look like poor average episodes of "Communication Street." As some in the blessed with a talent that can be both accessible and frustrating at the same time, witness his version of DUNE, to most people a chaotic, jumbled, rambling piece of cinema but to my view, one of the most daringly original science fiction films ever seen. Perhaps its very strangeness and slow plotting repulse most viewers before they have really entered into the mind of the film (and mind is what classifies Lynch consistently to his it is all important, and he knows it—see "Inception" or "Mulholland Drive").

He also condenses to ticking darkness, and dark images exist in his films in abundance. His first feature, **ERASEHEAD**, is virtually a symphony to black, with disquieting sums of light and dark, noise and silence, then sharp off aesthetic, almost unconscious reactions to the viewer. This trait was carried over, to some extent, in his next film, **THE ELEPHANT MAN**. Here, however, it is put to much greater use, combining with a liturgical script and superb acting to create one of the most memorable cinematic experiences of the past two years. Surrealistic images still abound, however, and once again the whole film, flow and visual texture of the film is given top priority by Lynch (have mood, actors will follow!).

In an age of cinematic what-ifs, it is extremely rewarding to have someone like David Lynch directing movies. So many films released at the cinema in any given year are soulless and unforgiving, relying purely on the audience's ability to simply keep their eyes open and follow the plot (in other words, not to think and not even to feel). Watching one of this man's films involves a great deal more: you have to think and try to interpret visual language (**ERASEHEAD**), you have to become involved in a place and with character's emotions and feel something for them, good or bad (**ERASEHEAD**), and you can be transported to alien worlds and characters, and watch them crying and snarling accordingly (**DUNE**).

Lynch has imposed his films with an overall unity of style that makes them seem almost continuous of a single theme which is elusive to the viewer (the last shot of **ERASEHEAD** reappears, in color, on the opening of **DUNE**). The similarities are vast, and so is his talent, a true artist working in a field which is more often than not commercial and banalistic.

With just four feature films released, Lynch looks to be one of the best emerging film makers of our time so far. This talent due as he indicates overall by just one transcendent moment in **DUNE**, as the camera leaves itself into the giant mouth of a sandworm, an image which exactly parallels a moment in **ERASEHEAD** which was seen some two years previously. A prime example of the overall unity prevalent in Lynch's work.



CHUCK FILMS BY DAVID LYNCH TO DATE:

ERASEHEAD (1979, 85 minutes)

Made with the help of the American Film Institute Center for Advanced Film Studies, Lynch's first feature (begun in the early seventies, released in late 1978) is a dark, disquieting piece of abstract symbolism, dream logic and sheer perverseness. It is, quite possibly, the most bizarre film ever made, and without doubt has a visual look and intensity which is unique and only. Only because the images that the eye is forced to see are those of darkness, decay, incomprehension and disgust.

In title the "Title" of Henry, his girlfriend Mary (who is prone to epileptic fits) and their mutual offspring, which is blind-like, quiet and different, and yet is probably the only thing in the film that is able to draw audience sympathy: it's sheer helplessness and alone appears making it the focus of the viewers' attention for much of the second half. (19)

The film opens with Henry's face at a close-up screen, while a distant planet moves over nearby. A burned man sitting inside by a window pulls levers, which appears to draw a woman-like figure from Henry's mouth, which looks like a viewer. A light appears at the end, and we emerge to find Henry on the "floor" as he makes his way through a desolate, industrial landscape in his body home.

He has witnessed a birth, but whose? Henry's? Perhaps the child's, for when he returns to his apartment, his rather bizarre neighbor (identified in the credits as "The beautiful girl across the hall") calls his Mary called, and that her parents are expecting his for dinner. (Henry, as it turns out, is to be "one-made" children that twist and bend, but more of that later).

Inside his small room, repeat dark bald prescience. Tattered bedclothes, rotting shrubs in piles of earth on a dressing-table, darkness and dust. Also, a reflection, which, as a slow moving camera-track, the viewer comes to realize will be important later on. Henry drives a truck in it, then goes in a dream which involves a kind of water hole which he flips a coin, and Mary's photo, torn in half. The people of **ERASEHEAD** are almost emotionless; they do not talk unless it is necessary, and then utter meaningless drivel, for when Henry arrives at Mary's parents, a leading question of "What do you do?" is countered with a meaningless "Oh, it's an excellent" answer to the end of ambiguity, stress and a pack of dogs sucking their mother on the floor, dinner which bleeds and twitches as Henry tries to carve it, causing Mary's mom to have a violent fit and leave the room. On returning, she informs him of Mary's child and asks if he is the father, while making blatant advances to him in front of her daughter. What standards, then, are pretty low in this ugly world (before all), whether it is stated it is Mary's.

When next seen, Mary is at Henry's home, feeding their child and waiting for Henry to return from work. This waiting, alone-shape horror like on a table, swathed in bandages, spotting its foot out as Mary feels it? Henry returns, smiles and lays on the bed, staring at the radiator. To him, it symbolizes warmth and security, perhaps that of the womb, the "one-birth" which he longs for. Night approaches, P.D.W.-type lighting constantly splits the darkness onto a wall outside the window, and Mary becomes increasingly frustrated with the child's cries, eventually leaving Henry and telling him to rest after things while she is gone. "Why don't you just stay here?" he replies.

Soon the baby becomes sick and Henry sets up an evaporator close by it and takes its temperature. Roomspout (every time he goes to leave, it cries) he asks once as a sign of self-fulfillment in fantasizing the ideal woman, childless, childless, childless, smiling, appears on a stage in the radiator and down a Shirley Temple-like side step while spreading over-the-hill justice which fell across her (him) ultimate wish, to casual out the child's birth, combining with his personal desires and rejection that Mary gives him).

Suddenly we are lost, just as Henry is, because Mary reappears in bed, drowsy and gasping for breath. Had she ever left? Where did she find him? Now writhing were things. One time in the bed, are thrown out by Henry, and a small worm-like creature and swallow the camera, and we reappear staring through a hole at Henry. Then, a brief track with the woman opposite as Henry and she sink in an embrace into a bed of silky film, noise and percussive, until just her hair floats on the surface. The "father-daughter" returns to song to Henry followed by the sequence from which the film derives its title. Again, we suppose, this time where Henry, awakening from his dream. The baby laughs hysterically, contentedly, until, awaked that in his calm, withdrawn manner? Henry takes a pair of scissors and cuts open the child's bandages which were part of its body. Chaos and destruction reigns and, in the final conclusion, Henry is reunited with his "father-daughter" his ideal woman, in a cold, white, sterile heaven.

There is so many way to understand this film. It is ugly, repellent and, in a very strong way, often identified (then) on the social surface (for example). It follows its own logic that it prepares right to the end, distancing the viewer inside his/her own head and challenging her concept of dream/realism, woman/strawberry, mother/bestial, occurrences in an unforgettable way. On repeated viewings it yields more of itself and yet remains enigmatic overall; it is a truly unique film.



THE ELEPHANT MAN (1980, 127 minutes)

In comparison with ERASERHEAD, Lynch's second feature is almost normal, but again is constantly illuminated by the director's penchant for bizarre shots, lighting and overall mood. Photographed in breathtaking black and white by genre favourite Freddie Francis, with haunting music from John Morris, it tells the true tale of John Merrick, a hideously deformed Victorian freak and his treatment at the hands of a circus manager, Bytes, and a kindly surgeon, Frederick Treves. The mood of the film this time, however, is not puzzlement but sadness, and yet even in its memorably distressing climax, we emerge with a feeling of optimism and wonderment; all is not so ugly this time round for Lynch.

His masterful direction is held aloft by some truly remarkable acting, particularly from John Hurt, who, under one of the most skilful makeups ever devised for film (the work of Christopher Tucker) emotes in a way that makes him totally believable. Counterbalancing his sensitivity is Freddie Jones (so memorable in Hammer's FRANKENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED) as Bytes, who simultaneously despises and loves his deformed "Wage packet" Anthony Hopkins, too, is magnificent as Treves, Merrick's saviour and friend, and makes the meeting between himself and Merrick (after the elephant man's kidnapping to the continent by Bytes and eventual return to England) the stuff of great cinema. Only Anne Bancroft as a sympathetic actress who "falls for" John strikes rather a false note.

Elsewhere, the film is wall-nigh impossible to fault. From the remarkable production design of Victorian England (with Lynch's use of steam, dirt, machinery and smoke), to costumes, lighting, script and general overall visual flow, it has seldom been improved on in effortless quality since its release in 1980. Lynch proved, after his awesomely bizarre start, to have a remarkable control of combining visuals, characterization and plotting to achieve the desired emotional effort, and emotional the film certainly is. It is full of irresistible scenes: Treves' first view of the elephant man with the camera slowly tracking in on Anthony Hopkins' dumb-struck face as a tear comes to his eye; Merrick's first attempt at speaking by pronouncing his name; Merrick reciting "The Lord is my Shepherd" to the hospital governor Carr Coggan (John Gielgud); the taunting of John by the crowd of yobs; his return, and of course the stunning climax as John lives out his fantasies of beauty on stage in a pantomime, before putting himself gently to death.

No one could have predicted after ERASERHEAD, that Lynch could possibly have made a film of this brilliance.

bizarre characters, sets and exotic feel and the end result is a remarkable piece of cross-pollinating between a director and a project. The film is truly immense to look at, superbly detailed, intelligent and contains strong character interest, moving the film along to its brilliant final battle as Atreides leads his troops into action on the back of mile-long sandworms. It is a tremendously understated, breathtaking piece of science fiction which will hopefully receive the recognition that it justly deserves, though quite when remains to be seen.



BLUE VELVET (1987, 119 minutes)

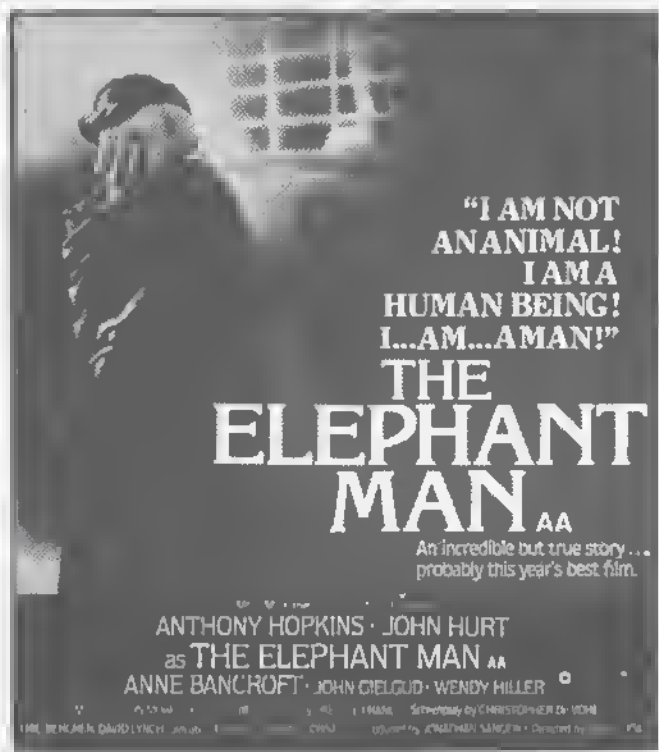
There can be little doubt that Lynch's latest cinematic offering is his most powerful and relentless yet, touching nerve-ends and parts of the brain that desire most strongly to be left alone, and yet it is not violence for violence sake. It is instead Lynch at his most daring, exposing the vile underbelly of one of those "Oh-so-peaceful" American small-towns, in this case Lumberton.

Jeffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) returns home when his father falls ill and is hospitalised, and while wandering motely through a neighbouring backlot just happens to discover a severed, ant-covered human ear. As any good young American student would do, he pops it into a brown paper bag and takes it along to the hard-working police inspector Williams. He meets and later falls for the inspector's daughter Sandy (Laura Dern) and they soon discover that the mystery has some connection with a sultry nightclub singer Dorothy Vallens (Isabella Rossellini, in a scorching performance). It also has a great deal to do with psychopath Frank Booth (Dennis Hopper). While casing Dorothy's dingy apartment (shades of Henry's ERASERHEAD flat), Jeffrey is forced to hide in a cupboard when she returns. In a scene of sheer perversity, Dorothy discovers him amongst her evening-gowns, threatens him with a knife, then strips and seduces him. A moment of inspired comic grotesquerie occurs the following day when he tells an enquiring Sandy that "Things didn't go as planned last night." Too true!

Continuing to investigate he soon voyeuristically witnesses, from the same wardrobe, Frank waiting, sniffing a bizarre blue gas through a sock, and indulging in an appalling display of auto-masochistic sex with Dorothy, which is so shocking as it is hypnotising. Now Lynch could force two actors to carry out this scene with such shattering realism is almost beyond belief. It isn't long before Frank discovers our hero and then the nightmare really begins!

The most memorable thing in BLUE VELVET (aside from its typically "Lynchian" visual style) is Dennis Hopper, whose performance as Frank must stand as the most repellent and unforgettable villain in screen history; Leatherface is a real sweetie beside this guy! The non-stop tirade of filth that issues from his mouth, the hideous scenes with Dorothy and his treatment of her (he has kidnapped her husband and son, hence the extra-neous human ear lying around in a field, so she is forced to endure his actions) makes his presence on screen almost unbearable to watch. The climax too, is breathtakingly intense, with Jeffrey once more hiding in the closet as the maniacal Frank draws ever nearer.

There is a happy ending, of sorts, beautifully realised by Lynch and his cameraman Frederick ERASERHEAD Elmes, which is gratefully received by the audience after all the unstoppable horrors we have been put through. It is, however, an almost impossible film to like, as brilliantly directed, shot, edited and acted as it is; a genuinely dark tour-de-force of tension and shock tactics which never once gives the audience a chance to relax. My only hope is that with BLUE VELVET, Lynch has dragged most of his perverse notions from his unique psyche and laid them raw onto film, and that he won't feel the need to make another one quite like it. One BLUE VELVET is great and bearable; two would be gratuitous and intolerable. Let us now look forward to RONNIE ROCKET and beyond.



DUNE (1984, 136 minutes)

For his third feature (the first in colour) Lynch rose to a cost of thousands and a budget of around 50 million dollars. Not a bad jump after just two features. This is probably his most disliked film and I do not understand why. Perhaps because the book is held in such high esteem by "Dunies" (of which I am one), so why the complaints?

In a vast, complex saga, admittedly compressed from the novel (after all, would you want it nine hours long?), Lynch gives himself free reign to create the sort of startling images ERASERHEAD was full of, indeed, Jack Nance, alias Henry, even makes a cameo appearance as does the director himself. The cast is superb, Kyle MacLachlan is just right as Paul Atreides as is Francesca Annis as his mother, Lady Jessica. Freddie Jones appears again as Thufir Hawat and Kenneth McMillan is wonderfully over the top as the "Floating fat man" Baron Vladimir Harkonnen, all boils and shouting!

The film alternates between a dreamy mood in its desert scenes and particularly the "Folding-space" sequence (with full marks to the music of Toto) and violent, large-scale action sequences with one of the most magnificent climaxes I have ever seen. There were accusations of incomprehension thrown at the film which seem unfounded. I followed the plot without any trouble and would have done so even if I hadn't read the book.

The story takes place on several different worlds, with Arrakis, or Dune, as its centre. In a nutshell, it tells of the House of Atreides' battle against the House of Harkonnen (the baddies) for control of the spice Melange, which permits travel to any part of the universe and thus overall supremacy. In the middle of all this is Paul, who is to learn that he is the universe's super-being, the "Kwisatz Haderach" and the Baron, who has a nasty habit of pulling people's heart plugs out and spitting in ladies' faces! It's no wonder that Lynch directed this film, with its

Forgotten But Filed



BY PHIL GODFREY

Is this occasional series I intend to cover films that may find most interest to you may have not come across before. Their remaining ones might be due to various reasons: obscurity, age, lack of decent distribution, unavailability of English language/subtitled prints or just plain bloody-mindedness on the part of the DVD/Blu-ray owners.

These films may not be masterpieces (how many acknowledged masterpieces do you know of that are impossible to see?) but they are of interest. And if you, the reader, have an undiscovered horror epic lurking in your video collection or know of a great film everybody seems about that you just can't track down then let me know, perhaps we could include it in a future edition.

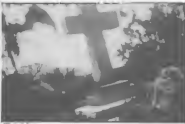
Although I will be the first to admit that it is impossible to do justice to the world of low-budget horror filmmaking in anything under 500 pages, one does get the feeling, after wading the stuff for a while, that most of the output can be divided into three main categories: 1. These films exist solely for the money. 2. Movies catering to the audience's blood lust, or at least pretending to do so. 3. The "Eureka" pictures, usually incompetently made films that wear their shortcomings with pride, as if to say, "We know this is crap, but what the heck, the audience knows it as well [the virtues of *Alien* being prime examples]. Many films fall into more than one category but depressingly few avoid all of them.

The only films made in the 1980's that come readily to mind are: *THE EVIL DEAD*, *BASKET CASE*, Abel Ferrara's *No 45* and Mark Romanek's *STASIS* (ROMANOV's budget is too high to include it on the list). *STASIS* is very much a standards/very amateurish equivalent to these films, what an extremely low budget (and judging from the quality of the video prints, *Stasis*) and full of interesting ideas and filmmaking of a quality rarely found in cinema's poverty row.

Since the success of *EL-RODIONTO* it has become popular to write about films that are based on, or influenced by, the works of R.P. Lovecraft. However in all these articles I have never come across a mention of *EXORCISM* as it is a story of the unravelling of the mysteries from an ancient book, and the intervention of demons from another dimension is pure Lovecraft. Presumably the only reason for its exclusion is that few people have actually seen the film) and I can't see it becoming any less obscure in the future. Even the otherwise excellent *Jurassic Film Encyclopedia* ignores it, citing it from both the *Horror* and *Science Fiction* volumes.

The film was originally made as a student project on *Stasis* scenes were later added by professor Jack R. Harris to bring it up to feature length. In this respect it can be compared to John Carpenter's *DUEL OF THE DEAD*, which also began life as a student film, though to most other aspects Carpenter's film is superior. In fairness though, the additional footage has been integrated very well with no obvious joins visible. American sources say the film was originally shot in 1967 with the extra scenes put in by 1979. Through the video print available to this country (on *Monstrous Video*) has a copyright date of 1966. Judging from the tall film of some of the cars and the length of the guys' hair (it's) I'd guess the film was shot in 1964-65. Perhaps Fritz Leiber, the well-known writer who has a cameo in the film, could put us right.

Apart from Leiber I didn't recognise any names on the credits except Ed Begley Jr (an excellent actor); surely this can't be the same Ed Begley Jr who appeared in "It" (Henderson) on TV. However a recognisable face does appear in the film, that of Frank



THE JOURNALIST'S WILDLY BURNING ATTITUDE



THE TENTACLE BEAST DOING A WRECKING-SPREE

Banner (listed in the credits as Frank Boone) who the writer Herb Tarlek from "WARP in Civilization" (now looking a lot younger. Special effects fans will recognise the names of Jim Swerth and David Allen who did excellent stop motion work for this and a number of other low and medium budget films (KRONENBERG, THE SILVER PAGES OF DR. LEO etc).

The film follows the story of David Fielding (Howard Cosell) who escapes from an unseen thing only to be run over by a driverless car. On a year and a day later, with a journalist attempting to reopen the investigation concerning the death of three students, the disappearance of a professor, Dr. Weirama, and David Fielding's apparent insanity, Fielding had been, when originally picked up, that something would happen a year and a day later, and the journalist was involved in writing about, if anything, would occur. He confronts the catatonic student with a picture of Dr. Weirama (Fritz Leiber), who then goes berserk with fear and he has to beat a hasty retreat.

David's psychiatrist then plays him the tape of an interview he'd undertaken the day after Fielding had been brought in, and the events of this fateful day are recounted. It transpires that David had received a strange and ironic phone call from Dr. Weirama, his geology professor, that morning, asking him to come up to the professor's mountain cabin. Posing happily to pick up a friend, Jim Rutan (Frank Boone Jr.), Jim's girl Nicky and her friend Susan who tag along for the ride, he heads off for the cabin, which they find totally destroyed. A strange voice from a nearby cave terrifies them and upon investigating they discover an old man who gives them a large, leather-bound book which is full of ancient spells. It also contains a note from Dr. Weirama partly explaining the symbols and a description of an experiment he undertakes using a spell mentioned in the book.

The book is an ancient esoteric text originating from the Persian Gulf area and had been used by demologists through the ages to bring demons across from another dimension. Dr. Weirama's experiment had also, unfortunately, brought forth a demon, in the shape of a giant tentacle beast, which had destroyed the cabin.

David is then attacked by the local sheriff, named Amos, who had been looking menacing earlier on, and who is actually a demon in disguise. The breaks free but Amos transforms himself into a 15-20 foot blue-skinned human-like monster and sets into the four towers. They escape, killing the monster in the process. The creature disappears and returns again as Amos (the name is the ancient Jewish word for a demon - literally spirit of anger). They discover that Dr. Weirama's spell had actually created a link between the two dimensions through which Amos would send it with. Jim then follows the demon into the other dimension but is killed by Amos who then takes his form. The duplicate then attacks David, trying to recapture the book; he falls, then turns into a winged demon, kills Vicki and chases David and Susan.

They escape by hiding behind a cross-shaped gravestone into which the monster almost resulting in a large explosion. It then attacks the wayward to David "In one year and one day you will be dead." The film then cuts back to the opening scenes with David being hit by a driverless car... After hearing the story, the journalist leaves the hospital, no longer mystified than before, only to see Susan coming in the opposite direction.

I will be the first to admit the film is an undiscovered masterpiece. It is an odd one on location, more a cut-of-throat to some money and the photography and production design is perfunctory - it's not helped by being shot on *Stasis*. It is also overly talky, a common problem among low budget films (as people who have sat through *John Milligan's* films will know). However the script is very well written, being both literate and interesting, the acting good for such a minimal budgeted film and the stop-motion scenes, monsters and winged demons are extremely well made and integrated into the film. The makers must also have been acquainted with the works of Lovecraft as the film contains many ideas and references used by the master in his stories.

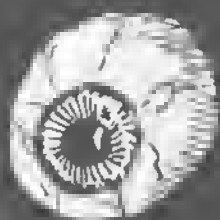
In general one of Lovecraft's favourite villains was the attempt by ancient evil powers to restore their domination over the world. The achievement of these ends usually depended on the participation of an intellectual person of dubious morality or a backwoods family with some fearful ancestry. That villainous wizard the *SHROUDS* of the mad Arab Abdul Alhazred also made an appearance. Another villain of the frightful Nag-Schuch, Yagathi and Nyarlathotep. The survivor of the story tended to be a young friend of the central character or an interested observer, and they usually ended up escaping, with the demons safely dispatched, alive but sad or with questionable sanity.

It seems to me that the above synopsis covers *EXORCISM* pretty well. Attempts by demons to enter our dimension, helped by an aging intellectual and an ancient book, and beaten by a young student. The best plot of *EXORCISM* to not a million miles from "The Dunwich Horror" "The Monster of the Deep" or "The Shadow Out of Time." So if you're a Lovecraft fan and bored of an evening you could do a lot worse than watch *EXORCISM*, a worthy addition to their group of films influenced by the works of Howard Phillips Lovecraft. Then again you'll probably have a job tracking it down.

A GUIDE TO
CANNIBAL
MOVIES



I
JUST
ATE SOMEONE WHO
DISAGREED WITH ME!



IN PART ONE OF THIS TWO PART FEATURE GIACOMO MARTINO CHEWS OVER "CANNIBAL APOCALYPSE, FINDS FOOD FOR THOUGHT IN "CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST, WONDER WHAT THE HELL "FEROX" MEANS AND GENERALLY GETS HIS TEETH INTO THE CANNIBAL MOVIES.

At the height of the well-orchestrated "Fifteen Minutes" hysteria, Lord Lane, Lord Chad Justice, posed the question "Did it really require live cannibals to make people realize what the horror 'video wars'?" Of course it was obvious to anyone who actively bothered to see the films, that the only cannibalism that was going on was of stock footage - the meat was done to appear (and not so appear) affects. Those who will admit this might care to ask themselves how Al Ciletti, Iwan Renshaw, Neke Lay and co. kept coming back to be exhibited by the active in film editor files.

But we didn't let too harsh on Lane, with mistakes had been made before. Lucien Fulda, the old ducking torturer himself, was hauled before the bars on account of the dismembered dogs in 1973's *UNA LICENTIA* OR LA DONNA'S LIZARD IN A WOMAN'S SEED. Only the best cinematic appearance of Carlo Mascheit with one of the prosthetic dogs used for the effects stopped Fulda going down for a stretch. Most countries of all were the allegations that the killing of a prisoner by police in 1963's *AFRICA AFRICA* (AFRICA - BLOOD AND STONE) had been set up by the makers, Messrs. Giuliano Jacopetti and Franco Perpetri. The resulting hue and cry interpreted their acting of some little cinema, which had commenced with MONDO CANE in 1961. MONDO CANE gave the world Rite Orislen's international hit theme song "Here" and spawned a host of imitations along with two official sequels. The formula was gleeful "Here of the Screws" - type documentary exposure of various nationalities or "Here" things going on around the globe - usually in animals, anthropological evidence and general carnage.

To understand the late 70's/early 80's spate of Italian cannibal films (there were in other countries are invariably inferior efforts, as we shall see) one has to understand the "Nazi" phenomenon. Faced daily with the evidence of their shrewdness seen in the eyes of a audience, presented, Italian films had to come to terms with decline (basically I wonder how far we can caricature the current agonizing over the health of the British film industry with our own economic decline). The Fascist epics, and Musolini's ardent imperialism in general, represented the bread and circuses solution. Reacting against this, postwar Italian filmmakers delivered undiluted studies of "Life in the rev." The "Nazi" films represented the twisting of this basic documentary eye over the grotesque, the weird, the exciting. The dialectical transformation of Nazi-films into the polar opposite - in other words, with Mondo you could have your "bread and circuses" and eat it all and graciously. The "Nazi" films can be seen as the last gasp of a genre, a genre that was the cinema of post-imperialist countries towards what they like to think of the "Nazi" behaviour of the third world peoples who were previously as the receiving end of imperialism. Umberto Lenzi's *CANNIBAL FEROX* is the most explicit critique of this attitude.

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But the true heirs of Mondo were the cannibal films, the worst of which frequently tried to be a bit as that some sort of society can be inflicted upon an unfortunate animal. Eugene Denes's own first off the mark with *LETTRE MORTUO CANNIBALE/LETTRE CANNIBALE/CANNIBAL/LETTRE CANNIBALE* (1974), made in the Philippines, it detailed the harrowing ordeal of Neotoma (Peechi) who falls among the savages (including Neke Lay). In rapid, subjected to various indignities (if you're into golden showers you'll love this one) and can only escape by partaking of the human flesh. Fusch's disgust at this individual was rendered by the slow-to-notice expedient of mugging into the camera from point-blank range, which would become a staple shot at this point in the plot of subsequent cannibal films.

The impetus for the cannibal was provided by the cinematic event of *APOCALYPSE NOW* (1979), but a more subtle formative influence appears to have been a film made back in 1932, Mark Schreider's *LA VALLEE DES VALLES* (DISCOURDED BY CLONES), whose success probably had a lot to do with the way it was typed as some sort of first loss of cinema. In fact it was an art-house commercialism of "Cultural tourism", in which the "Garden of Eden" was metamorphosed into a New Guinea curia sac to be as barren as the women since they lived in "Civilization".

LA VALLEE strongly influenced the career of the cannibal films to that it made the white dilettante who corrupted the native environment, a message the reverse of the racism in *ULTRAMOND CANNIBALE*. Denes took this notion on board for his *CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST/SHOCK MURDER* (1978) which if anything is a racist circle racist whites. The film is brilliantly executed as a criticism of the "Nazi" school of film making (it could have been titled *MONDO MONDO*) though the viewer must decide for himself whether *HOLOCAUST* is a serious satirical as the form or a parody case of the peddling of titillation under the guise of stimulation.

HOLOCAUST opens with a know-it-all TV reporter commenting that "You no omnipotent and will soon conquer space, yet only just a few hours flight from New York City, people are still living in the Stone Age." The report continues with a host of wacky Jacopetti clones settling off for expeditions South American parties to shed some light on the situation. There's the theory, but the next we hear of these guys, they're staring stunned dead, and a second mission, led by professor John Monroe is sent to discover their fate. Monroe is disturbed by the socio behaviour of the hard-assed Spanish hunter who is assigned to show them the ropes (and about this is the finest) to the jungle. He captures a native and forces him to lead them to the Tree People. Their religious guide is treated like an animal, rewarded for "Good behavior" with cocaine blow in his face. He roasts to the Tree People's place, then witnesses the local punishment for adultery, which involves violation with a

'Cannibal' obscenity verdict in Milan

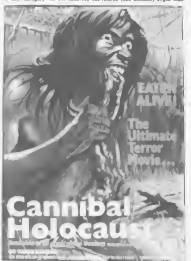
AN EXAMPLE OF THE PRESS CONSIDER "CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST" RECEIVED WHEN IT DIVIDED, FROM SCREEN INTERNATIONAL

Edge back, followed up with a mid-pack pitted with sherry actors.

They find the Tree People, the general consensus among whom is that the first expedition were bad news, specifically their filming activities (of Denise Meyer's *THE LAST MOVIE*, 1973). When Monroe gains their confidence by stealing himself to eat human flesh, they show him a advice fashioned from the moral creases of the first camera-crew and their photographic paraphernalia. The natives are all in favour of Monroe taking the footage back with him, as though this will associate with spirits.

Back in America, the salvaged film is prepared for transmission as *"The Green Inferno"*, but Monroe begins to have doubts when he checks out the late time's previous effort, *"Last Seen in Hell"*, a crude Jacopetti-type collage of atrocities that got into the same difficulties as *AFRICA AFRICA*. The complete and remembered of these who lived and worked with them lend weight to this obscure impression.

The developed film initially reveals an obsessive cataloguing of the unpleasantness and discomfort of a jungle expedition, but when the editors fire of this they begin to kill and torture animals to spite things up a bit. By the time they meet the Tree People they are ready for rape and murder, planning to pass it off as interpreted war film. Also, the leader, excitedly declines anti-Musoliniist efforts about the week giving way to the strong as he supervises the burning alive of a group of Tree People. One of the TV people viewing the film opines that it should be broadcast as that people can make up their own minds - it seems fair enough that if the editors brought their fate upon themselves the world should be told, rather than let it be believed it was because of the "savagery" of the natives, but Monroe (and Denes) argue that



the film should be banned - a startling (and not isolated) example of a "video Nazi" which argues for the suppression of "video Nazis". These are soldiers the public can be brutalized and dehumanized - "The more you see their faces, the more they seem to like it."

What they are not convince the others of Morice's argument: After some reginal assistance the natives strike back in the chillingly realistic climax. The apostrophe's flight is hastened by their otherwise filming of the chase (if the well-documented denizens of some real life war reporters) - "No" he really got involved in the edit this time, starting to film the last hit. Now I don't even know where we are." But by one they are caught, beaten, castrated, efficiently stripped down to skeletons and eaten. Also becomes a victim of his own philosophy who has become: discipline tells him that it's more important to get the film back to civilization than to stay and help him. It's the survivor's apprentice who falls last: The natives crowd over him, seething his and the moment of death, recorded on his face, takes up the final few frames of the film (POGGING TIM in the jungle!)

As he leaves the TV studio Morice wonders "Who are the real cannibals?" Well they're the guys who eat people.

"Nobody had heard of CANNIBAL HOLocaust..." said one British distributor "...till I wrote to Mary Whitehouse complaining about it. Once she got to see the sub I couldn't run off enough copies to meet demand." A camp operator for sure, but ultimately such tactics (of SHUFF) were to prove an overkill. As if to establish Doudane's movie credentials, HOLocaust experienced distribution difficulties in Italy because not everyone was convinced that the special effects were effects. On the other hand... it was precisely this farcical quality that made the film a big hit in Japan, on top that a sequel, CANNIBAL PART was announced. This was subsequently abandoned in favor of Doudane's projected history of zombies, YOGGOTO REVERENCE, but then never made it to the screen either. Doudane was back in the jungle for 1984's CUT AND RUN, and 1985 saw his serious "love story" at times territory with RORY COOT CANNIBAL HOLocaust 2 has been announced, as keep your fingers crossed for that one.

Further testimony to the power of CANNIBAL HOLocaust is the fact that Umberto Lenzi's CANNIBAL FEROCE/WHY THEN DIE SLUGS (1980), though it dispenses with the double-narrative format, is virtually a remake of the "film within a film." In fact FEROCE actually manages to top HOLocaust for harrowing violence - in Doudane's film the bad guys are beaten down and killed, in gruesome fashion aesthetically, but the narrative revenge to FEROCE is the worse for being prolonged, ceremonial torture. Those who saw the truncated version, which is sold as well, must have been puzzled by the film's inclusion on the Southern VHS list, but the full-length effort (however brutal) seemed not and even (with a penis) and a woman hung up with hooks through her breasts.

As is Nicholas Roeg's WALKABOUT, the wilderness action is bookended by familiar urban scenes for dramatic contrast. Two families whose collective vocabulary seems to consist exclusively of the terms "shit-face" and "motherfucker" are searching New York for a guy called Mike who turned them in a drug deal. But he's back-home in it to enter cinema - a cannibal-infested jungle. There he meets up with a lady professor who has a shaky grip of anthropology - she plans to discover three reported incidents of cannibalism in the apparent belief that this will establish that "Cannibalism as an organized human practice does not exist and historically has never existed... the mythical lie of the cannibal feral."



SEE TO REMOVED A COPY LINK: "CANNIBAL FEROCE" STILL.

So I don't understand that either, but her challenger puts the argument in a nutshell - "You can't see it without."

Mike (John Morgan) insists on the beneficial effects of cocaine but clearly is getting more crossed with each snort. However, his little girl sidekick's search for coca leaves in the jungle as a family reminder that the Ruble Savage had been missing the stuff for centuries before it was introduced to the alienated Western hipsters who we will soon be led to believe are surviving on their illicit substances.

The usual stuff is trotted out - natives chewing jagged ("New disgusting"), jagged chewing natives (also pretty disgusting), even "A pop-walking jagged." When they reach a native village Mike demonstrates much sympathy by killing a pig. When concerned for this act he says "Do you get off on ecology, evet?" What a therapist? Mike soon makes the inevitable transition from pop-walker to rapist, with his girlfriend faint a week on an escalation of unskilled beating is another focus of these sunny jungle rapist. But even she draws the line when he kills a native, he responds with the courtesy we have come to expect, "Get off my case, motherfucker!"

Mike eventually loses his British behavior as a reaction to "a bad movie" - a friend of his was captured by the natives - "They castrated him with a machete... (deep breath) then they ate his CHITLINS." Delivered with much eye-rolling and teeth-grinding, this line is inevitably greeted with hysterical audience laughter. For Mike's account turns out to be "Bastard" - the native treatment of his friend had been due to the whites unraveling crudely towards them ("I'll say that - maybe the time I feel a bit cross and the only way to get it out of my system is to eat some guy's dough"). He's pushed back to the level of animals, they're an unenlightened they'll do anything" while one of the professor's team. "Yeah and the bad news is we'll all pay" to the cheering reply "...discovery or guilt? They use it split hairs!" No, but they'll split hairs! The aforementioned machete-eye commotion, but they eat - the best prof escapes and returns here to present his dissertation "Cannibalism - the end of a myth." The moral is just be nice to the natives and they won't eat you. Thanks a lot Umberto. But this wasn't all he had to say as the subject. Oh no, as long as he was on location, he had the episode, I was thinking and he lay comatose on his back, plus a nightmare pit of stock footage... local culture. Local was... going to be heard. The early 80's were a busy time for the director (who sometimes signs himself Roderick Hubbard) - NIGHTMARE CITY aka CITY OF THE MALLING DEAR (1980) ranks as the most domestic film is that most domestic of sub-genres, the zombie film, featuring as it does, walking dead who seethe the usual killing and gorging in favor of jumping out of airplanes with blazing machine guns. There's also an Italianian variation on the over-popular "Do it or die" theme, oh no it wasn't" ending.



Next issue: HELP ALIVE OVERLORD, SATUR ALIVE, FOLLOWER OF THE CANNIBAL GOD, CANNIBAL APOCALYPSE, CANNIBAL MAN and more, all in SAVANNA 4. No self-respecting cannibal would be seen without it!



THIS IS HOW THEY SERVE IT THAT CANNIBAL HOLocaust MURDER BEATING IN "CANNIBAL FEROCE" LOOKS JOHN MORGAN IS PLACED UNDER A TABLE WITH A HOLE IN IT THROUGH WHICH THE TOP OF HIS HEAD FITS...



A Cannibal then took off the exposed top of JOHN'S HEAD WITH A SHARP INSTRUMENT IN MUCH THE SAME WAY AS YOU OR I WOULD REMOVE THE TOP OF A BOILED EGG, AND LO AND BEHOLD... BRAINS IN A BOWL.



THIS is the part of **SANBORN** where you can track down that elusive piece of horror film-related material that you are looking for and it won't cost you a penny to do so. As you can see a lot of readers have already taken the opportunity to advertise their wares and on from time to time this service will also be open to people selling horror film merchandise.

Simply write down what you either want or are selling (and please make it clear which section they are to go in) in a maximum of 30 words then add your name, address and/or phone number and send it to the editorial address on page three marking your envelope "Collector's Corner."

This is an entirely free service (the things we do for you!) and all ads should arrive by June 20 in order to be included in the July-August issue (No. 4). In the meantime don't forget all the ads on this page are for **MARTIN** and are not items for sale. For obvious reasons we cannot accept any advertisements for "Video Services." Sorry.

ANYTHING to do with **NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET**. Also any horror film stills and information as to where I can purchase from large for sale. Mr. M.C.S. Tucker, 39 Kildea Road, Victoria Park,ournemouth BH5 2BU.

ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK Starburst poster magazine in nearly mint condition James Belter 4, Mills Drive, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 3BU

FANGORIA Nos 11, 12, 20, 31, 29, 30, 45. Also Dave Barker's "Coco Score" and "Connoisseurs's Guide to the Contemporary Horror Film." John McGarry's "Video Screens" and good condition videos of **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** and **DAWN OF THE DEAD**. Richard Bissley, 9 Marlton Way, Haverbrook, Lancaster LA1 5W.

POSTERS for Argento's **BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE**, **DEEP RED**, **SUSPIRIA**, **INFERNO** and **FOUR PINKS ON GREY VELVET**. Graham Pople, 2 Shesley Lane, Wesley Castle, Stranaghan, E29 5PL.

ORIGINAL movie posters for **THE EVIL DEAD** and **BEYONDARS IN A DAMAGED BRAIN**. John Withers, 24 Aaland Road, Stratford, London E25 3UL.

FANGORIA Nos 1-12 and No. 41. David Grieve, 11 Mountpleasant Road, Ruthven, Isle of Bute, Scotland PA26 9HQ.

U.S. good poster for **A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET**. E. Bewick, 53 Myvera Avenue, Long Eaton, Nottinghamshire NG10 1AE.

"BARBARAS COLLINS AND THE CRISPY MITCH" by Marilyn Ross. "THE NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS" (book based on the film) and Rex Barker's "THE SAT FILM LOG." M. M. Updeley, 125 Clifton Common, Brighton, West Yorkshire BN6 4JF.

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD novel by John Russo published by NEL (not the recent filmbook), **DAWN OF THE DEAD** novel (if one exists), **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** good condition VHS video and any other material relating to Romero's **SUBVERSIVE** trilogy. Lance A. Harley, 22 Queens Road, Eastworth, Warwickshire CV8 2JD.

ART Argento film posters and soundtrack for **DEMONS**. Tony Gibson, 17, Meadowfield Terrace, Peckhamvale, Forest Hill, Newcastles-Upon-Tyne, NE12 9HS.

QUATERMASS related material. Collector seeks anything on this subject. Please phone Harrison 01-597 9123.

MOGELS (mostly Blake models) from the TV show **THUNDERBOLTS**, **CAPTAIN SCHARLET**, **STUNDRAY**. Gareth Jones, 51 Goratay Lane, Burnwood, Maccell, Staffs W57 5BH.

POSTERS, stills, cuttings etc. of Sybil Seenting (of **MYSTLE BEFORE THE STARS** and **HOLING 11** feat) Please call 3933, weekdays after 4pm and ask for Alan.

ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW posters photos, programmes. "Locusts" 18, Newport Street, Tiverton, Devon EX16 6RL.

CLIM in the dark room films, preferably still boxed and unopened. David Williamson, 127 Rochdale Road East, Heywood, Lancashire OL10 1QB.

PSYCHOTRONIC Film Encyclopedia and **HOUSE OF HORROR** Nos 2, 3, 5 and 6. Ian Ward, 236 Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent MK23 1SF.

FANGORIA No. 38 and any **EVIL DEAD** material. Anthony Garry, 25 Hawthorn Croft, Oldbury, Warley, W. Midlands B68 0DP.

POSTER for the film **SALON'S LOT** Michael Evans, "Speedbasher Court," 3 Myrtle Street, Applebush, North Devon EX38 1PL.

RAMPS/Cushings/Lee material (especially books). Ian Taylor, 4 Mountcresson Close, Over Hulton, Bolton, Gt. Manchester M18 1BT.

FANGORIA Nos. 38 and 40. Also the recent **CATASTROPHE** by THE SPECIEN. Ben Squares, 5 Atherton Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 2SH.

MONROES OF THE SCIENCE (very old fanzine), any other fanzines from about 25 years ago and any Hammer/Peter Cushing items. Melvyn Green, 8 Garsfield Avenue, Salford 7, Greater Manchester, Lancs.

FANGORIA Nos 17 and 35 and any photos of "Genneth" or "Dumbie" films. E. White, 22 Stephenson Road, Gosport, Isle of Wight PO21 7PP.

ANYTHING to do with **QUINTERMANS**. John Ball, 90 Hurst Lye Road, Aliberton, Liverpool L18 7V9.

FANGORIA Nos 23, 34, 30, 31, 35, 37 and 38. Also any TEXAS CHAINSAW MONSTER and THE KILLS HAVE ENDS items. William Stoves Jr, 11 Rose Hollow, South Oak, Farnham, Surrey GU9 0BU.

WICKHAM MOVIES by Elm Wexman. Also the paperback novel **MARTIN** by George Russo and the **DAWN OF THE DEAD** poster map. Jon Galloway C/O the **SANBORN** editorial address.

VIDEO SCREENS (U.S. book), House of Hammer No. 3, World of Horror No. 2, also posters/stills from **HOUSE OF THE CEMETERIES**, **MARK OF THE DEVIL** and **NEW YORK SLIPPER**.

W. Reeves, 3 Pinfold Close, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 9JM



Due to the large number of adverts for the Collector's Corner section I am afraid there isn't room to go into any detailed reviews of the fanzines received but you've got the best information to be getting on with.

If you want your horror film fanzine to be reviewed in the next issue of **SANBORN** please make sure we receive it by June 20 (and don't forget you'll get a copy of **SANBORN** in exchange). If you send off for any of the fanzines mentioned below please tell them you read about them in **SANBORN**.

VERBODEN! Issue 5 (10 pages) 20p (plus first class stamp for postage). Includes TEXAS 3, HOUSE FOR EMBALMA, TONIC AGENCIES, LAST NOISE ON THE LOFT, SPLATTER UNIVERSE, NIGHT TRAIN MURDERS. Available from Nigel Bartlett, 30 Viceroy Street, Wetherbury, West Midlands W51D 5WP.

MORRIS TINES Issue 1 (4 pages) 25p (plus first class stamp for postage). Includes reviews of ALIENS, THE HYDROGEN BOMB, THE FLY, CLYDE BRIS, BILLY SAVANNA, INTRUDERS FROM SPACE. Available from Andrew Davis, 25 Goldcroft Road, Wetherbury, West Midlands W51D 5WH.

PIECES OF PUZZLE Issue 2 (20 pages) 50p (plus first class stamp for postage). Includes **SHOGUN** interview and short story, **WILLER BULLITT**, James Herbert's **The Magic Circle** and **Clive Barker's** **Demetrios** Gals. Gowing. Available from Gareth Jones, 51 Goratay Lane, Burnwood, Maccell, West Midlands W57 5BH.

MARTIN'S DANGER Issue 1 (22 pages) 25p (plus first class stamp). Includes Fantasy in British style. Terror Victims, the horror/fantasy films of 1965 reviewed, **CHERNOBYL**, **NO-ARMYMAN**, **RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD**, **HOUSE**. Available from Paul Gibson, 63 Geoffrey Street, Chorley, Lancashire PR6 0HF.

A LITTLE CHRISTIAN HORROR (24 pages) 30p (plus first class stamp). Compares original comic strips and stories including an adaptation of H.P. Lovecraft's **From Beyond** and an illustrated **werewolf** story. Available from Andrew Pope, 173 Walsden/Wall Road, Belvedere East, Glasgow G21 3HU.

HOLLYWOOD NOISE AND POSTER NEWS Free on long as enough money in U.S. funds to send in comic postage. A monthly mini-look/collector. The current issue (I've not seen it yet) should be 40 pages and include Herschell Gordon Lewis and Bruce Campbell. Available from Eric J. Gettlin, Hollywood Book and Poster Co, 1706 N. Lee Palace Ave, Hollywood, California 90028.

THE EVIL DEAD

(CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE...)

SUDDENLY: SCOTT BURSTS IN.



SCOTT! WHAT HAPPENED?

THE TREE'S, THEY'RE ALIVE

SHE LUNGES FOR ASH!

THERE'S A PATHWAY, TH-
THROUGH THE WOODS...

BUT THE TREES...

WE'RE GONNA GET YOU
WE'RE GONNA GET YOU

BUT HE EVENTUALLY DE-
FEATS THE GIRL HE ONCE
LOVED.

A VICTORY WHICH IS
ONLY A CHARADE FOR
AS ASH BURIES LINDA'S BODY.

HE RETURNS TO FIND SCOTT
DEAD AND CHERYL ESCAPED

AND WHILE SEARCHING FOR
THE ELUSIVE CREATURE...

HE DISCOVERS THE EVIL EXTENT
OF HER POWER...

AND THAT SCOTT HAS BECOME
THE HOST OF YET ANOTHER OF
THE SPIRITS OF KUN-DARR.



THEN CHERYL MAKES
HER ENTRANCE...

BUT AS ASH
RUNS...



A POKER IS GRASPED...

AND THERE IS PAIN.

...BROUGHT DOWN
UPON HIM...



HE FALLS

AND THROUGH THE HAZE OF PAIN HE
NOTICES THE WHISPS OF SMOKE FROM
SCOTT AND THE BOOK...



COULD THERE BE
A CONNECTION?

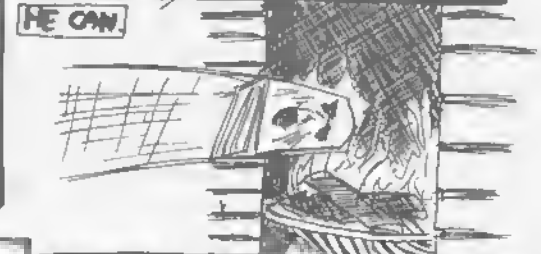
SO JUST PRAY THE PENDANT
CAN LATCH TO THE BOOK



AND THAT
YOU CAN
THROW IT
FAR ENOUGH



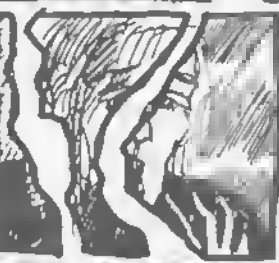
HE CAN.



JOIN US
JOIN US
JOIN US
JOIN US
JOIN US
JOIN US



AND IT HAS NEVER BEEN THIS
BEAUTIFUL...



BEFORE.

AND THROUGH THE DOOR, THE
SUN BATHES YOUR FACE



END R.

Spinning In The Grave



BY MARK HOCKLEY

SOUNDTRACK music is at last becoming acknowledged as a major force in film today and with its increasing importance and quality, more and more people are beginning to collect the works of leading composers like Jerry Goldsmith, John Barry, John Williams, James Horner etc. I for one, applaud the emergence of the many great talents like these at work in today's film industry, their music now taking the art of sound and vision onward towards new and more exciting horizons.

And it is, especially in the genres of horror, fantasy and science fiction that music has made the greatest impression. You only have to listen to the scores for movies like HALLOWEEN, SUSPIRIA, PHANTASM or THE OMEN trilogy to find the most inventive and atmospheric use of music to be found in film.

THE FLY Composed and conducted by HOWARD SHORE
(Varese Sarabande STV 81289) recommended price £6.49

Another worthwhile release from Varese who have been making it their business to make available a wide variety of fine soundtrack music.

Those familiar with the films of David Cronenberg will undoubtedly know the name of Howard Shore. Having previously supplied scores for THE BROOD, SCANNERS and VIDEODROME, he has shown himself to be an interesting and talented film composer. His music for SCANNERS in particular, showing great promise. And now, with the soundtrack for Cronenberg's excellent remake of THE FLY, he has fulfilled his early promise. Unlike Shore's other works, he has employed a full scale orchestra for this score, abandoning his usual synthesised style. And in taking this decision, he has triumphed magnificently.

Anyone seeing the film and coming away moved by its emotionally charged finale would surely have to acknowledge the integral part Shore's music played in achieving this effect. From the brooding main title to the outstanding theme, first heard on the track "Plasma Pool" the music plays a major part in the film's development finally coming into its own in the finale.

Shore creates an emotional and inspiring music score which perfectly complements Cronenberg's visual style. It is a soundtrack of many subtleties and a major work to boot. With Cronenberg's next film TWINS it is likely we will have a new score by Shore and if THE FLY is anything to go on, it will be something to watch out for. If film music is meant to uplift and enhance, then there is no better example than this. Howard Shore brings THE FLY to life.



LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR CLEARASIL. JEFF GOLDBLUM IN A SCENE FROM "THE FLY."

VAMP Composed and arranged by JONATHAN ELIAS
(Varese Sarabande STV 81288) recommended price £6.49

Anyone who saw the film version of Stephen King's short story CHILDREN OF THE CORN may not have been unduly impressed with the movie itself but would possibly still have taken note of the fine music score. This was the work of Jonathan Elias, a young man trying to make his mark in the fiercely competitive world of film composing. However, with VAMP now safely under his belt, he can't fail to build an interesting and notable career for himself.

The score for VAMP is one of the most exciting and ambitious works I have heard to date. With its extensive use of drum programming and synthesizers it is film music at its most powerful and should be heard and not just left to sit silently somewhere in the background. Many tracks on the album impress, but the electric "Escape From the Fire" on side two, stands out. With so many other composites using large orchestras and symphonic sounds, admittedly to great effect, it is refreshing to come across someone trying something different. Following in the footsteps of John Carpenter, this score by Jonathan Elias is one to savour, full of atmosphere and inspiration and I for one will look forward with anticipation to his next work which will, I am sure, establish him as one of the best young composers around at the moment.

HALLOWEEN II Composed and performed by JOHN CARPENTER in association with ALAN HOWARTH (Varese Sarabande STV 81152)

Admittedly an oldie, this one, but a real golden oldie and well worth digging up. But why not re-view the original? Well, I'll tell you why. The second album, which still contains the superb main theme and most of the best cues from the first film, is simply better.

Production is superior and the synthesizers now used are far more advanced than those on HALLOWEEN. Also, Carpenter has enlisted the very able help of Alan Howarth, who gives the album a polished production, plus sleeve notes on the scoring of the film. You need only compare the two versions of the main title on each of the albums to see the greater depth and quality that HALLOWEEN II has.

That said, we shouldn't overlook the original's raw energy which endears it to the listener. In addition, Carpenter, on a relatively low budget, could only use the equipment available to him at the time, so all in all, the score for HALLOWEEN II is an extension and "clarification" of his first film. It is certainly one of the most effective pieces of film music ever written and it is a point to remember that John Carpenter is indeed unique, in that he is not only an excellent director but also, very probably, the finest composer of electronic/synthesised music the film industry has ever seen or heard!

THE CRYPT OF DR. CADAVEROUS

PURVEYOR OF

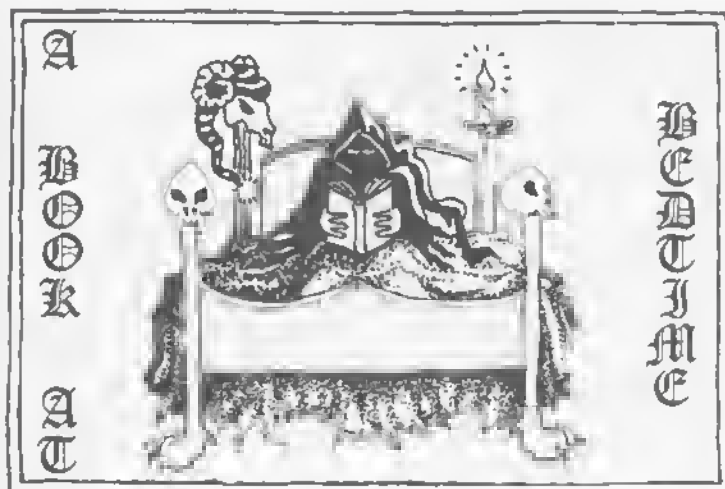
STRANGE

ARTEFACTS

The Crypt,
36 WINDERMERE ROAD,
LANCASTER, LANCs,
LA1 3EX...



DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE! RE-ANIMATE YOURSELF OR A DEAR ONE AS ONE OF DR. CADAVEROUS' CUSTOM-BUILT ZOMBIE MODELS... IMAGINE YOURSELF CLAWING TO FREEDOM FROM A GRAVE PLOT ADORNED WITH REAL TOMBSTONE MOSS, AND WITH FULL PERSONAL DETAILS (INCLUDING REQUIRED DATE OF DEATH) INSCRIBED UPON A CHOICE OF HEADSTONES. FOR FULL DETAILS OF THE DOCTOR'S DRASTICALLY DECOMPOSING DELIGHTS SEND SAE TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS... ☺☺☺



DARIO ARGENTO: IL BRIVIDO, IL SANGUE, IL THRILLING Fabio Giovanni (Edizioni Dedalo)

A recent, well researched book on Italian director/producer Dario Argento, written by a young (28) Roman author and covering all the director's films up to and including *DEMONS* (1985).

Argento's life and career are tackled, along with the influences which affected his films, including a chapter on the subject of music, a very important part of any Argento movie.

The photographs reproduced range from horrible (a ghastly Ania Pieroni shot from *INFERNO*) to the unusual (behind the scenes) as well as some nice Japanese artwork. An extract from the screenplay of *PHENOMENA*/CREEPERS rounds off the book to good effect. Titled "The aesthetics of murder" it concerns the death of Vera Gebuhr, played by the director's daughter, Flore, and makes an interesting comparison with the scene in the finished film.

All in all a very good book, worth buying if you can read Italian. If not the £19 it cost this reviewer to buy a copy would be better spent on other things as the stills are variable and some are of very poor quality indeed.



"SUSPIRIA": POSSIBLY ARGENTO'S FINEST HOUR

STEPHEN KING AT THE MOVIES Jessie Horsting (Starlog Press) \$9.95 import

King fans still reeling from the shock of hearing that IT has been bought by American TV can cheer themselves up with this excellent guide to King's so-far-filmed works, up to and including the yet-to-be-released in this country *MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE* which, by all accounts suggests King is more at home with a pen than a camera.

The book is a horror film fan's dream. Not only is every King movie covered, chronologically with an excellent selection of stills (about half of which are in colour) but there are new interviews with a number of big genre names involved in bringing King's work to the screen. These include John Carpenter (*CHRISTINE*), Tobe Hooper (*SALEM'S LOT*), George Romero (*CREEPSHOW* which for some strange reason is the only film to have no credits listing in the book, only cast) and Lewis Teague (*CUJO* and *CAT'S EYE*) the director who, more so than all the others, has faithfully captured some of the essence of King in a movie.

And of course the book wouldn't be complete without an interview with the man himself which provides a nice prelude to the main coverage of the films. Each film is well synthesised and reviewed and there are some fascinating snippets of information that should please all trivia buffs. For example on *THE DEAD ZONE* director Cronenberg, in order to get Christopher Walken to flinch involuntarily at the scenes where Johnny has his visions, would fire a .357 Magnum thus frightening the shit out of Walken and resulting in some very realistic flinches!

A number of volumes have been written about King's writing (*FEAR ITSELF* edited by Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller is one of the best) but *STEPHEN KING AT THE MOVIES* is certainly the definitive guide to the films.



THE PAINE MAN IN A SCENE FROM 'CREEPSHOW'.

HORRORSHOWS Gene Wright (David and Charles) £15

Unfortunately quality reference books on the horror film are few and far between. Admittedly last year saw the publication of Phil Hardy's seminal *AURUM FILM ENCYCLOPEDIA VOLUME 3 HORROR* but as a rule you have to wade through a pile of "Picture books" (you know the sort, lots of full page colour stills and little else) before you come across something worth reading.

Although not nearly as comprehensive as the *AURUM* volume Gene Wright's *HORRORSHOWS* is an invaluable addition to any fan's bookshelf and where it really does score is in its inclusion of horror in radio, theatre and television. So alongside Universal's *FRANKENSTEIN* and Terry Fisher's *FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL* we find mention of the 1981 Broadway stage version that closed in one night registering a \$2 million loss thus making it Broadway's most catastrophic flop and rank it alongside the cinema's *HEAVEN'S GATE*.

And even better than this is the inclusion of TV movies, that much maligned sub-genre that seems to get very little coverage. Let's not forget that Spielberg's *DUEL* was originally made for television and is duly mentioned in the book along with the likes of *GARGOYLES* (1972), *THE DARK SECRET OF HARVEST HOME* (1978), *LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO ROSEMARY'S BABY* (1976), *MOON OF THE WOLF* (1972) and a host of others.

Of equal interest are the television programmes covered which range from the old favourites like *THE MUNSTERS*, *THE TWILIGHT ZONE* and *ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS* (both the old fifties/sixties ones and the new 1985 series) to sunn delights as an animated *KING KONG* (1966-69) and William Castle's *CIRCLE OF FEAR* (1973). But of course it's the feature films you are really interested in and they do comprise the bulk of this 300 page book.

It is divided into 12 chapters with such titles as: "Gozies and Freaks," "Catsclysmic Disasters," "Werewolves and Other Shape-Shifters" and "Spiatter" and thankfully an extensive index at the back makes looking up a particular film an easy task (horror-film-book writers please take note, there's nothing more annoying than a book without an index to the films contained therein). Each chapter then contains a brief introduction followed by reviews/cast/credits/plots for films/TV shows/plays etc that fit into that category and although there are bound to be omissions Wright gets in most of the important stuff.

I say most as there are a couple of serious faults, not least of which is the exclusion of Dario Argento from the chapter on the "Horror-Makers" which nevertheless includes Martine Beswick! To my knowledge Christopher Lee wasn't in *THE LEGEND OF THE SEVEN GOLDEN VAMPIRES* (1973) and John Carpenter didn't direct *HALLOWEEN II* and *HALLOWEEN III*. Neither was Donald Pleasence in Carpenter's *THE THING* but we all make mistakes and this shouldn't detract from an otherwise excellent tome. Illustrated with over 125 black and white photos *HORRORSHOWS* isn't exactly cheap but that said, it's well worth saving up for, providing, as it does, a comprehensive guide to horror, not only on the big screen but the small one, the stage and the radio.

HORROR HOLOCAUST Chas. Balun (Fentsco Enterprises) \$9.95 import

Chas Balun favours the Fangoria-patented wildly enthusiastic rush of slammo-bammo prose, and often seems more concerned with getting on to the next wise-crack than bothering to list things like alternative titles or release dates for films. *HORROR HOLOCAUST* is hardly the most definitive reference work of all time - for instance Balun pays lip service to the idea that Dario Argento is one of the modern greats, and cites Mario Bava as a towering influence on the genre, but offers no real evidence to the uninitiated to substantiate these claims. BUT... although he doesn't really say anything you haven't heard before, he says it with such gusto and obvious passion for his personal favourites (*TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE*, Tom Savini and *RE-ANIMATOR*) that he won this reader around: Besides, the tasteful shot of Chas, posing with bloodied machetes in front of his *CANNIBAL FEROX* poster testifies to the fact that he's a *SAMHAIN* kind of guy. What will really clinch a place in your heart for *HORROR HOLOCAUST* is the calibre of the illustrations, culled from Eric Caidin's Hollywood Book and Poster Co. - posters and stills, some of which you will have seen before, an awful lot of which you won't; Jsp artwork, lots of cannibal stuff, sleazy F.O.W. stills for *DOCTOR BUTCHER M.D.* and a shot from that missing *RE-ANIMATOR* scene.



EVIL DEAD II: DEAD BY DAWN (Pulse) 85 minutes

EVIL DEAD II, subtitled DEAD BY DAWN on the publicity but not the film, is without doubt the most frenetic film of the year. With hardly a pause for breath it careens through 85 minutes of thrills and gore - and I loved it. Imagine a cross between a Tom and Jerry cartoon, an EC comic "Tales From The Crypt" story and a ghost train ride and you get some of the flavor of the film.

It's the rehashing of Joe Dante's TWILIGHT ZONE - THE MOVIE episode served up and peddled out to feature length. KRUL BRKS II is a true horror comedy, is the best sense of the phrase, and has up vote for the funniest film of the year, however it won't get my vote for the scariest simply because it is too cartoonish; to be terrified you need characters you can identify with - these bums are just too weird to take seriously.

After the opening, in which a narrator tells us about the Book of the Dead, the action starts straight away with Ash (Bruce Campbell, who suffers no end in the name of art) repelling the demons of the previous film by decapitating and burying his girlfriend, Linda (Suzanne Bierler). Of course a good corpse doesn't lie down and before he can say my friend, the three is up and doing an aerobic routine while the severed head tries to use his fingers for support.

Into the scene comes Arnie (Sarah Berry) daughter of the late Professor Raymond Smokey, who had originally found and deciphered the book. She is investigating what became of her father after he arrived back in the USA, and has in the byproduct Ed (Richard Dauer) who doesn't last five minutes, and local hicks Jake and Bobbie Joe, the bridge with her another few pages of the Book of the Dead, which provide instructions for disposing of the dead.

Ash's measured sister, Sheriella, turns up in the cellar and causes a lot of problems for Arnie and Ash who, after such a thing, consign her to oblivion along with Ed and most of the local woodland.

The plot is totally rudimentary, being just sufficient to move the film from one act-point to the next. This useful lack of story only becomes obvious during the occasional expository scene, when you get the awkward feeling that the film really isn't going anywhere but then it's back to the action, and worries about plot are quickly forgotten.

The entire film seems to have been shot using a Steadicam which is endlessly panning, or more visually tearing, through the undergrowth or round the cottage. The shot normally ends up as the terrified face of Ash, who understandably gets pretty miffed by all the attention given him by the demons, and fights back Keano-style with chains in one arm and gun in another.

The photography by Peter Donkin is superb and gives the film the feel of an old fashioned colour SF/horror epic, in all the indoor scenes especially. However the special effects are the stars of the show, coming into almost every scene, whether it be Ash disintegrated (in a really terrible anti-shit) against a blood-red sun, Ash trying to remove his own head with a chainsaw, or Ash being swallowed by a monster from hell, etc... Notice how all these things happen to Ash - I can't praise Bruce Campbell enough; he does a brilliant job with tough material and maintains an expression of near-insanity long after the rest of us would have flipped entirely. None over Paul Humeau...

If you've had a tough week, EVIL DEAD II will come as a real tonic; it's fast, mindless and superbly entertaining. Just leave your brain at home and enjoy. By the way, watch out for director Sam Raimi at the end as he's shining around!

TOXIC AVENGER (Blue Dolphin) 88 minutes

TOXIC AVENGER, from SCUM-OF-the-earth outfit THORN, reaches those shores three years late and wastes 11 minutes of ultra-violence. The cuss have been made so clumsily that at times it's hard to figure out what the hell is going on, elsewhere it's obvious what the action is leading up to, but we are cheated to the splatter pay-off - a cannibalising experience for gobs. Really this butchered mess is still a laugh - a minute monster movie spoof - local hero Melvin, running away from his hometown, falls into a vat of toxic waste and is transformed into the spewy super hero (in the accompaniment of Musakog's "A Night on the Bare Mountain") who proceeds to sort out the local low-lives (apparently 99% of the population) in graphic fashion.

There's enough tit and bow, plus a dash of horror movie cliché, action and sequences and general high-spirited vulgarity along the way to keep the average Suckhead grinning from ear to ear. I've got mixed feelings about viewing the complete prize - for once I was almost glad of censorship, sparing us as it did the (real) killing of a blind girl's garter dog. We in the Suckhead office can take as much cannibalism gut-crunching as the Stallone can throw at us, because we know it's all staged. But surely go insane in the cause of asking a last look at cut & go.

GOTHIC (Virgins) 87 minutes

Now that everyone else has slightly caught up with him, Leo Guggili finds himself quite at home in the pop video industry. On the evidence of his latest feature film, GOTHIC, he should spend more time at home.

The sample story (Gard Ryan and his stompers, the Shelleys and Dr. Felder) hole up in a Swiss chalet, load up an episode and get down to some unsolicited business - see scene adds a whole new meaning to the expression "Shaggle cargo" - as a prelude to Mary Shelley writing FRANKENSTEIN is freighted with the visual non sequiturs that are Russell's stock-in-trade. Though this approach occasionally threatens to say something interesting about, for instance, the way symbolism and personal experience are projected by the consumption of hallucinogens (just think what Buck King might have made of this) and there's a highly effective lift from B. Lowenthal's story THE CUCKOO, by and large the director's mannered box of tricks doesn't add for Gothic Bore.

Thomas Doherty's score is similarly disappointing, re-creating "Gothic music" clichés right-to-the-bar, and at one point breaking in to the theme from JMS for Chocoma. Ultimately the only thing conveyed by all this mood and fury is that the characters aren't too keen on dying - well, join the club.

Now it's not entirely unheard of for stupid things to happen in a Russell film, and for them to happen in the most lurid and garish manner that is humanly possible. But in this case the film is too frankly appalling performers were cranked from such attractive and talented leads as Gabriel Byrne and Natasha Richardson. Perhaps the former was cast as the "old, bad and dangerous to know" Ariosto because his surname is a near-anagram of Russell's - if there was any more compelling reason than this he seems to be unaware of it, stumbling around trying to make up his mind which leg is the gassy one, sporting pseudo-productive as such a way as to make one wonder why everyone was supposed to have found such a damified facious prick an attractive. Ms. Richardson's Scottish accent is as reliable as Byrne's leg, and her awkwardness seems more down to sheer embarrassment than any characterization of Shelley's gauche young wife.

In years to come these two will be doctoring their C.V.'s to suit any reference to GOTHIC, but Julian Sands as Shelley takes the proverbial biscuit, turning in a performance that would get his laugh off the set of CHOCOMA. If good acting consisted of shrieking and palling faces this guy would get an Oscar. Maybe it was all that opium sniffing that got him chewing the scenery. Only Timothy Spall (harshly of TV's NEW MINORITIES) as Dr. Felder emerges with any scrap of credit, an encephalic rival to rival any of Houdini's. Of course, the actors had little alternative but to go over the top, confronted with a script that's as subtle as a flying chameleon. For instance the notion that Byrne himself was the model for the worship of Gothic fiction is suggested by having him perform readings on a screaming voice (not recommended in these AIDS-conscious days). Later the principals adjourn to a cellar, where the up-reeling recipient of these dire attentions whether asked to join as Richardson crawls around vomiting - for one surreal scene I thought the projectionist had slipped as a reel from PINK FLAMINGO. But the one that brought the house down was Shelley's "O.L. I do declare a bit new - I can handle it" routine. The danger of emphasizing this "Tristram Shandy" angle is that the reader may get the impression that he or she will enjoy watching GOTHIC. Let us assure you, you won't. The overwhelming audience response was summed up neatly by one of Felder's lines - "I don't want to hear what you have to say...I want to kill you!"

Fortunately (??) the director wasn't in the audience, as the latter punters started for expressing their verdict on seeing with their feet. Russell can do a lot better than this, but then again as much as I liked this GOTHIC is one of the worst films.





BREEDERS

Ingredients:

A clutch of good looking girls willing to disrobe on camera.
The minimum number of "Actors" necessary to keep the story moving.
(don't forget the minority interest).
A corny script that's a rehash of a rehash of that famous film from ten years ago.
A dash of references to MARS NEEDS WOMEN.
Some gross makeup FX.
One, or perhaps two, if you can afford it, rubber monster suits that look like rejects from Paul Blaisdell's jumble sale.
Mise-en-scene and direction (and almost everything else) from a couple of people who are still reading their "Filming by Numbers" book.
Mix in a little intentional humour to season and sit back for 80 minutes.
Et voila.....BREEDERS.

VIRGIN AMONG THE LIVING DEAD (Horror Theatre)

VIRGIN AMONG THE LIVING DEAD...humm, looks an interesting title. "A ghoulsh journey through the very centre of hell!" - yes an appealing ad-line. Directed by Jess Frank... uh, oh! It can't be another Jess Franco picture can it? Oh yes it can for VIRGIN is in fact Franco's LA MANSION DE LOS MUERTOS VIVIENTES (1982) minus all the nudity and sex.

What is left is a completely incomprehensible tale about a girl coming to clear up the estate of her dead father on a small island off the coast of France. Half the film consists of her thrashing around in bed moaning a lot. The living dead appear from time to time, stagger around, and try to look threatening. Some of them badly need a visit to the dentist. In its attempt to mix reality and dreams a la Bunuel (DISCREET CHARM OF THE BOURGEOISIE especially) the film succeeds only in making a total mess. You get the feeling Franco shot footage for three or four films simultaneously then edited them together at random. By the way, the film ends with the girl in bed thrashing around... For Franco fans and completists only.

BODY COUNT (IVS)

In 1982 Bruce Penhall won the world speedway championship final in America following a controversial clash in one heat with England's Kenny Carter in which Carter crashed (or was he pushed?) thus destroying his hopes of bringing the crown back home. Last year Carter made the headlines again when he blasted his wife with a shotgun before taking his own life. He had suspected his wife of having an affair. In the same year Ipswich speedway rider Billy Sanders took his own life after finding out that his wife was having an affair with Coventry rider Gary Guglielmi (who is currently doing time in Australia on drugs charges).

What's this got to do with BODY COUNT? Well apart from the fact that former speedway star Penhall is also the star of this abysmal stalk and slash effort, absolutely bngger afl, but it's a damn sight more interesting!



BRUCE PENHALL IN SPEEDWAY ACTION FOR THE USA. WHAT'S IT GOT TO DO WITH "BODY COUNT"? READ THE REVIEW.

DAY OF THE DEAD (Entertainment)

There are those of us who feel that George Romero is a vastly overrated director. To us doubters, DAY OF THE DEAD comes as a pleasant surprise. It's predecessor, DAWN OF THE DEAD, was the "Waiting for Godot" of gore, its one gag (consumerism = zombism) worn to single-cell thickness over feature length (what's more Fulci's schlocko quickie ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS effortlessly beat it at its own game).

DAY however, is everything that film should have been and goes a long way towards developing the vision Romero had for it - "The zombies are developing intellect and they are developing towards the destruction of human society and the establishment of a revolutionary social order." DAY hammers home its Philip K. Dick-like message of the dehumanisation of men relative to their inhuman adversaries with, among others, brutish military men, a mad scientist who fancies himself as the Barbara Woodhouse of the living dead, and Bnb, the sympathetic zombie, all walled up in the type of claustrophobic environment which Romero favours.

Tom Savini finally comes of age with truly mind-boggling splatter effects. I'd always had this guy marked down as a second-rater, but his work in DAY puts him right up there with the Bottins and Bakers of this world (in fact the zombies, who were just whitened up for NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and blined up for DAWN OF THE DEAD, now look like the Baker creations in Michael Jackson's THRILLER). While accolades are being handed out, I mustn't forget the ace cinematography of Michael Gornick.

It's not all good news though - Romero can't resist the temptation of carrying the anti-militarist message well OTT at the end and his brash characterisations are abrasive to British sensibilities. His players still leave a lot to be desired - too many of them seem to believe that shunting can substitute for acting, and Romero's usual token black guy (a nod to Val Lewton and co?) has the most eccentric West Indian accent of all time. And though the SFX are wonderful, I would question that a man with his head pulled off could continue to cry for help - such implausibilities were fun in RE-ANIMATOR but clash with the realism Romero is striving for here.

Romero is reportedly about to helm Paramount's WAR OF THE WORLDS remake. This seems not only an aesthetically pointless undertaking (indeed, DAY OF THE DEAD looked all the better for seeing it straight after Tobe Hooper's godawful INVADERS FROM MARS) but also comprising to his jealously-guarded independent status.

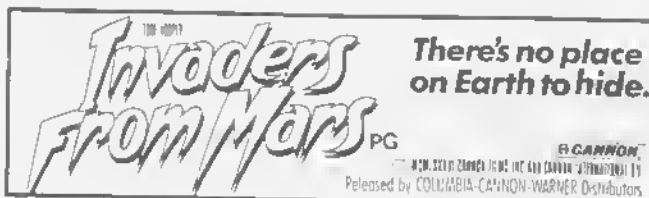
Probably the real motivation is to help finance his long-awaited adaptation of THE STAND by his old mate Stephen King (their friendship signalled by Bub being given SALEM'S LOT to read!) Now that will be interesting - and timely. DAY OF THE DEAD recalls THE CRAZIES, my favourite Romero, but it's about time he extended himself a bit - King's epic version of the apocalypse is just what the mad doctor ordered.



INVADERS FROM MARS

Tobe Hooper's place in The Horror Hall of Fame is guaranteed with TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE, but in recent years he's carved himself another niche in our hearts, Master of The Inadvertent Comedy Classic. INVADERS FROM MARS surprises by opening with an admirable shot, a spiralling slow zoom that promises a remake as visually intriguing as William Cameron Menzies' 1953 original (covered extensively in SAMHAIN issue one). Unfortunately the film quickly settles into a routine, inferior re-tread, with only the occasional chuckle to be had at the performance of Karen Black and real-life son Hunter Carson (these guys like to keep bad acting in the family), both of whom appear to be articulating through ill-fitting false teeth.

Louise Fletcher, believe it or not, is no better as the sinister school marm - how far the former oscar-winning actress has fallen! Never fear, judicious use of the fast-forward button brings us to the point where the military are called in, and from here onwards Hooper's notorious inability to cope with a large crew and cast guarantees a laugh-fest of LIFEFARCE proportions. Sure Les Dille's Martian underground HQ is pretty nifty, and Stan Winston's Martian honcho is a memorable little slime-bag, but the other aliens are more pantomime horse than state-of-the-art. The sfamno bamno twisteroo ending is curiously reminiscent of the one to Lucio Fulci's CITY OF THE LIVING DEAD, and every bit as ham-fisted.



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